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PERSIAN POPULAR ROMANCES BEFORE THE SAFAVID
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PERSIAN POPULAR ROMANCES BEFORE THE SAFAVID PERIOD

William Lippincott Hanaway, Jr.

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ABSTRACT

PERSIAN POPULAR ROMANCES BEFORE THE SAFAVID PERIOD

William Lippincott Hanaway, Jr.

Literature was one means used by the medieval Persians to keep alive and glorify their national past. The Sassanian chronicle Khwadāy Nāmag provided material for various versions of the national legend, best embodied in Ferdowsi's Shāhnāma. Just as legends and traditions of Persia's past were preserved by the minor nobility and recorded in the polite literature, so also was a large body of similar material preserved in the oral literature of the common people. In the course of oral transmission these narratives became mixed with other kinds of popular lore, religious and secular. Some storytellers told stories of great length, a few of which were written down. A small number of these popular stories, set down in prose before the Safavid era, have survived until today. I have termed them popular romances. Knowledge of these romances can add a new dimension to the study of Persian literature and popular culture. Until now they have not been seriously investigated.

For the purposes of this dissertation five texts were chosen, and these comprise the greater part of the existing works. The romances studied are Ṭarsusi's Dārāb Nāma, the anonymous Eskandar Nāma based ultimately on the Pseudo-

Callisthenes Alexander romance, Bighami's Dārāb Nāma (i.e. Firuz Shāh Nāma), the anonymous Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza, and Farāmarz ibn Khodādād's Samak-e 'Ayyār.

In this dissertation I attempt to show that these romances constitute a genre of their own, and that they are important in the history of Persian literature for literary, linguistic and historical reasons. They may also be considered as social documents of some importance. The genre is defined by both linguistic-stylistic and content criteria. A historical-critical method is employed, and the background, structure, narrative elements and language of the romances are examined, as well as some of the themes, individual in particular romances and general in all of them.

In the chapter on major motifs, the following are analyzed: warlike women and the survival of a popular belief in Anahita as represented by one of the female characters; the motif of Darius rejecting the daughter of Philip because of her bad breath, and the relation of this motif to that of the poison-damsel in Sanskrit literature; Alexander the Great, a foreign hero who becomes Persianized in both personality and genealogy, and the motif of javānmardi. The principles of javānmardi are of prime importance in forming the ideals of personal conduct of the heroes of the romances, thus making the romances at once a mirror of medieval Persian society, and a means by which these ideals were propagated and encouraged among the artisan and labor-

ing classes.

The didactic element in the romances is examined in chapter IV, and in chapter V the influence of Shāhnāma. In chapter VI some of the important minor motifs are discussed, such as that of the exposed infant, the aged and childless king, motifs from the geographical and travel literature of medieval Islam, and descriptions of nature.

Finally, in chapter VII, the form, narrative elements and language are analyzed. The form of the romances is essentially open-ended and determined by the traditions and techniques of oral storytelling. The plots are "chase" plots, and the development of the stories is linear and one-directional. Framed stories appear but are incongruous with the basic form. Narrative elements such as letters or battles are conventionalized, as is the characterization of the heroes. Similar elements appear in all the romances. The language is relatively simple compared with that of polite literature, but is varied in texture by the use of florid passages and verse.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BSOAS	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies
CRAIBL	Comptes Rendus des Séances. Academie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres.
EI ^{1,2}	Encyclopaedia of Islam, 1st and 2nd eds.
IJAL	International Journal of American Linguistics
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society
JRAS	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society
SBE	Sacred Books of the East
ZDMG	Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft

TRANSLITERATION TABLE

Consonants

<u>alef</u>	ا		<u>sad</u>	ص	s
<u>be</u>	ب	b	<u>zad</u>	ض	z
<u>pe</u>	پ	p	<u>ta</u>	ط	t
<u>te</u>	ت	t	<u>za</u>	ظ	z
<u>se</u>	ث	s	<u>eyn</u>	ع	e
<u>jim</u>	ج	j	<u>gheyn</u>	غ	gh
<u>che</u>	چ	ch	<u>fe</u>	ف	f
<u>he</u>	ه	h	<u>qaf</u>	ق	q
<u>khe</u>	خ	kh	<u>kaf</u>	ك	k
<u>dal</u>	د	d	<u>gaf</u>	گ	g
<u>zal</u>	ذ	z	<u>lam</u>	ل	l
<u>re</u>	ر	r	<u>mim</u>	م	m
<u>ze</u>	ز	ze	<u>nun</u>	ن	n
<u>zhe</u>	ژ	zh	<u>vav</u>	و	v
<u>sin</u>	س	s	<u>he</u>	ه	h
<u>shin</u>	ش	sh	<u>ye</u>	ی	y

Vowels

(fatha)	_____ َ	a	آ	ā
(kasra)	_____ ِ	e	ی	i
(zamma)	_____ ُ	o	و	u

* * *

(hamza)	ء	ء	(tashdid)	double consonant
(madda)	ـ	ā	(tanvin)	-an(-on, -en)

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Introduction

It has been said that every culture creates a past for itself, and in this respect Islamic Iran is no exception. To the Moslem Persian of medieval times, pre-Islamic Iran seemed to represent a golden age. Sassanian Persia, especially during the rule of Anoshirvan, and the more distant Achaemenian era appeared as a glorious and heroic past which was cherished and made symbolic on many levels of society in Iran.¹ Its legends were carefully preserved and transmitted, not by the court historians but by the landed gentry, the dehqāns, who were removed from the great urban centers where external religious and cultural influences were strong. The Zoroastrian religion persisted in isolated pockets well into the Islamic period. One of the oldest pieces of Persian prose which has survived is the so-called Old Introduction to the Shāhnāma² which describes how the Moslem governor of Tus summoned Zoroastrians from surrounding cities to come together and write a chronicle of the old kings of Iran. This was done in the early tenth century, when a national awakening was taking place.

¹ Cf. O. Grabar, Sassanian Silver (Ann Arbor, 1967), pp. 20-21.

² For text, see M. Qazvini, "Moqaddama-e Qadim-e Shāhnāma," in Hezāra-e Ferdowsi (Teheran, 1322), pp. 123-148.

At such a psychological moment, as the middle tenth century was for Persia, every means possible is summoned to help give spiritual form and definition to a nation.³ A national past was needed to glorify the present by showing a direct descent from a Golden Age. The national continuity could be demonstrated and personified by an unbroken line of legitimate rulers.⁴ The Shi'a Imams were linked to the Sassanian line through marriage. The national tradition made Alexander a half-brother of Darius III, and compressed the Arsacid period to a fraction of its actual duration. In this way there was forged a continuous chain of legitimate rulers from Darius I to the twelfth Imam, who disappeared in the middle of the ninth century A. D.

One means to keep alive and glorify the national past was through literature. The Sassanian chronicle Khwadāy Nāmāg had been translated several times from Pahlavi to Arabic, along with examples, now lost, of heroic literature. There was plenty of material available for a poet or historian to use as a basis for his version of the national epic. Ferdowsi was the last and greatest of a line of literary men who wrote Shāhnāmas in the ninth and tenth centuries, and possibly even earlier. He established a literary canon for writing epic poetry and

³ "Nation" and "national" are used in this study to mean the Persian speaking population of the Iranian cultural area.

⁴ See G. von Grunebaum, "Firdausi's Concept of History," in Fuad Köprülü Armağanı (Istanbul, 1953).

gave a lasting and meaningful form to the national legend. Ferdowsi by no means exhausted the available material however, and numerous other writers, some now anonymous, followed his example and cast parts of the national legend in the mold of epic poetry.

This activity was carried out by aristocrats or court supported poets. Thus epic poetry became part and parcel of the polite literature of Iran and underwent its own evolution as social and intellectual changes affected the literary scene in general. But the polite literature was not the only vehicle for preserving and transmitting the national legend. Just as stories, tales, legends and traditions had been kept alive by the dehqāns, so had they been preserved by the common people in an enormous body of oral literature which was passed from father to son in the family, and from storyteller to his audience in public. Storytelling has a long history in Iran, even if the details of it are not known.

In a society where the percentage of literates is low and largely confined to an elite class, it is likely that there will be a flourishing oral literature among the illiterate population. This is demonstrably the case with the Arabs and the Turks, and to be sure, the Iranians. Where the legends of Persia's past were versified in epic form on the one hand, they were told orally by storytellers to groups of listeners on the other. Furthermore these legends were told in a language that the common

man could understand, for the storytellers surely sprang from that milieu. In the course of oral transmission the old legends and stories became mixed with other kinds of popular lore, religious and secular. Some storytellers would tell tales of extreme length, and at a certain point in time a few of these long stories were written down. When they were written, they were couched in a language which was close to that which the storyteller would use to tell them in public. Because they were written down did not mean that they were no longer told though, for it is not unusual in this situation for an oral and a written version of a tale to exist side by side.

These popular stories were not entirely unaffected by the currents of polite literature, and they too evolved. With social and religious changes their structure and tone changed too, just as in the case of polite literature, and these social and religious currents are mirrored in the stories.

A small number of these popular stories which were written down before the Safavid era have survived until today. In the form in which we have them they are best termed popular romances, and will be so called in this thesis. These romances form a clearly defined genre which is of some importance in the history of Persian literature.

Although the existence of some of these romances has been known since the nineteenth century through the efforts of catalogers and literary historians, they have not been

seriously investigated and one could safely say that they have been studiously ignored.⁵ There are reasons for this attitude, but the reasons are no longer valid, and the time has come for these romances to be integrated into the larger body of Persian literature. In this respect Rypka's statement is important: "For a history of literature may not be limited to mere biographies and anecdotes in the manner of the ancient tadhkiras ('anthologies'), but must consist of an evaluation and linking up of the separate manifestations, and not merely in the case of the most eminent but also--and perhaps in even greater measure--of the mass of minor figures."⁶ It is to these products of minor and sometimes unknown storytellers that we shall turn our attention.

⁵ Cf. Pizzi's dictum quoted on p. 287 below.

⁶ History of Iranian Literature (Dordrecht, 1968), p. 82.

Chapter I

Materials and Methods

I. The texts to be discussed in this thesis will consist of five popular romances as listed below.

1. al-Tarsusi, Abu Tāher ibn Moḥammad ibn Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī ibn Musā. Dārāb Nāma, ed. Zabiḥallāh Ṣafā. 2 vols. Teheran, Bongāh-e Tarjoma va Nashr-e Ketāb, 1344-48/1965-69.

The oldest manuscript, on which the printed edition is based, was written by or at the order of Keyqobād ibn Maḥyār Pārsi, for Nowshirvān ibn Bahman Shāh Pārsi of Now-sari, India. The manuscript is dated 992/1584-85, and was copied from a manuscript in the possession of the Moghul Emperor Akbar.¹

2. Eskandar Nāma, ed. Iraj Afshār. Teheran, Bongāh-e Tarjoma va Nashr-e Ketāb, 1343/1964-65.

The manuscript is defective at the beginning and end, so very little is known about it. Internal evidence indicates that it was copied from a manuscript which had been written down by ʿAbd al-Kāfi ibn Abi al-Barakāt. It is dated on paleographic and stylistic grounds 6th-8th century A.H. (12th-14th century A.D.).² The editor attributes the text to Pseudo-Callisthenes, but this is questionable.³

¹ See introduction to Vol. I.

² See introduction to the printed edition.

³ See chap. III below.

3. Ṭāheri (Ṭāmeri), Mowlānā Sheykh Ḥāji Moḥammad ibn Sheykh Aḥmad ibn Mowlānā 'Alī ibn Ḥāji Moḥammad, known as Bighami. Firuz Shāh Nāma, ed. Zabihallāh Ṣafā. 2 vols. Teheran, Bongāh-e Tarjoma va Nashr-e Ketāb, 1339-1341/1960-63.

The manuscript on which the printed edition is based was written out by Maḥmud Daftar-Khwān, and is dated Tabriz, 887/1482-83. What has been printed represents parts I and II. Part III has not yet been discovered, and part IV exists in manuscript in the Uppsala University Library, Uppsala, Sweden, and is unedited. A microfilm of this manuscript was consulted for this study.

This text was published under the erroneous title of Dārāb Nāma, but in an appendix to Vol. II the editor acknowledges this error and says that the text should rightly be called Firuz Shāh Nāma.⁴

4. Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza, ed. Ja'far She'ār. Teheran, University of Teheran Press, 1347/1968-69.

According to Ṣafā this romance was originally written at the order of Ḥamza ibn 'Abdallāh Khāreji (also called Ḥamza ibn Āzerak Shāri, d. 213/828-29).⁵ Volume I of this edition has been published.

5. al-Aṣrajāni, Farāmarz ibn Khodādād ibn 'Abdallāh al-Kāteb. Samak-e 'Ayyar, ed. P. N. Khānlari. Teheran, various publishers, 1338/1959-60.

This romance was told by Ṣadaqa ibn Abi al-Qāsem Shirāzi. The date of the unique manuscript is unknown but

⁴ See introduction to Vol. I, and Vol. II, p. 765-66.

⁵ See introduction to Vol. I.

internal evidence places it not before 585/1189-90.⁶ Two volumes (in 4 parts) have been published.

It will be the task of this thesis to show that these romances do constitute a genre of their own, with their own particular logic and laws, and that they are important in the history of Persian literature for literary, linguistic and historical reasons. In the course of the thesis, the background, structure, narrative elements and language will be examined in selective detail.

The above romances were chosen for two reasons. First, the dates of the manuscripts all fall before or in the early Safavid period. In the Safavid period, the religious bias of Persian culture changed from Sunni to Shi'a Islam. To establish and propagate Shi'a Islam as the state religion, the government used many different means, and storytellers were one of them. New kinds of storytellers came into being, devoting their efforts specifically to praising 'Ali and the Imams, and telling the story of the massacre at Karbala. Naturally new religious elements began to enter the older romances. In two cases older romances were completely recreated in the Safavid period. Qeşsa-e Ĥamza became Romuz-e Ĥamza, and Eskandar Nāma became Eskandar Nāma-e Haft Jeldi, and the new stories were radical transformations of the older ones. It is because of the changed social and religious condi-

⁶ See introduction to Vol. I, Part 1.

tions in the Safavid era that those old romances were so profoundly altered. In addition, during this time many new romances were created on religious themes, forming a special sub-division of the genre. Thus the early Safavid era as a judicious cut-off date was chosen in order to discuss the older romances while they were still uninfluenced by Shi'a theology and the social changes brought about by a more prosperous and stable economy. To be sure, all the romances under study are strongly Islamized, but they do not reflect the specifically Persian form of Islam that Shi'ism was to become.

Second, one romance by each storyteller was selected for this study. Abu Tāher Ṭarsusi, creator of Dārāb Nāma, for example, created three other romances as well: Abu Moslem Nāma, Qahramān Nāma, and Qerān-e Ḥabashi. The inclusion of these would have extended the length of this thesis unduly.

Since the discovery of these romances and the recognition of their importance have come only recently, the process of their publication is still incomplete. Part II of Dārāb Nāma was published only after I had read the manuscript of it. The manuscript, still unpublished, of part IV of Firuz Shāh Nāma was consulted for this study.

II. The romances as they are now do not fall easily into any grouping. There are a number of possible frames of reference through which they could be approached, and some will be mentioned here. First, they could be

considered as either 'ayyār tales (Samak-e 'Ayyār, Firuz Shāh Nāma) or non-'ayyār tales (Dārāb Nāma, Eskandar Nāma, Qeṣṣa-e Hamza). This distinction is not particularly enlightening however, and would in the end only serve to indicate whether 'ayyāri did or did not play a significant role in the plot. There are no important characteristics of the 'ayyār or the non-'ayyār stories which would be revealed by such a classification.

The romances could also be approached from the point of view of folklore. Indeed there is a lot of folklore present in the romances, but they cannot be reasonably considered as folktales. They are in fact composed of clusters of folk motifs and the body of the romance itself can be thought of as a single folk motif expanded to enormous length. The pattern is similar in every case. The romance begins with certain preliminaries such as the family background of the yet unborn hero, an account of the marriage of his mother and father, his birth and youthful experiences until the time comes for him to begin to assume the role of hero, approximately the age of puberty. At this point the main action of the romance begins. All the motifs leading up to this point are motifs familiar in either Persian or world folklore. The romance itself may be no more than a lengthy elaboration of a folk motif such as the hero's quest for his father, his pursuit of his beloved or a search for adventure. The plots of the romances are mainly "chase" plots. However,

just as man is more than the sum of his parts, so are his intellectual creations. The romances are more than mere amalgams of folk motifs, for in them may be seen the broad reflection of a culture. Folk tales often grow out of a national legend, but the romances still preserve enough of the story of Persia's past, legendary and historical, to be counted a part of the national legend. They are the national legend living on a different level from Shāhnāma, and they have reached us through vastly different channels.

A third framework for approaching the romances would be to think of them as hero-cycle stories.⁷ Dārāb Nāma would particularly lend itself to such an analysis, but the others are less clear. It is possible that there are elements of much older myths of the soul in the romances, but if so they are deeply submerged and do not form a unified whole. Hero-cycle tales are properly epics, and the romances as we have them have lost their epic qualities. The hero is no longer, in Ker's words, "the man who is best at the things with which every one is familiar."⁸ He is now idealized, superhuman, and divinely guided.

The approach I have chosen is one calculated to reveal

⁷ For studies of the hero cycle, see J. Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces (New York, 1953), and Lord Raglan, The Hero (London, 1936).

⁸ Epic and Romance (New York, 1957), p. 7.

the specific qualities of the romances as Persian romances, growing out of Persian tradition and culture and forming a part of Persian literature. This approach will examine the body of romances as a meaningfully related whole forming a genre. The genre will be defined by both linguistic-stylistic and content criteria, that is to say the form of the romances will be examined as well as some of the themes, individual in particular romances and general in all of them.⁹ The language, in its turn, will be commented upon.

To try to discover what the romances are really like, I will examine some of the narrative elements which are the most emphasized or given in the most detail. It will be seen that certain elements are presented in a formal or conventional manner and repeated frequently. I will attempt to draw conclusions as to the inner meaning and the function in the narrative of these elements. The typological model for many of the narrative elements and events in the romances is Shāhnāma, but direct comparisons will be largely avoided.

No hard and fast distinction will be made between form and content. Thematic and structural elements will be described generally as narrative elements, because there is no way to distinguish invariably between the two except in the broadest and therefore the vaguest way.

⁹ For a discussion of the problem of genre definition in Persian, see C. T. Scott, Persian and Arabic Riddles (Bloomington, 1965).

The form of the book is the aesthetic organization of the matter of it. The romances have certain peculiarities which other kinds of literature do not have, such as frequently repeated narrative elements (the sealing of a letter, for example) and set-pieces (battle scenes with all the attendant activities).

My method then will be the historical-critical one. There is a basic problem inherent in dealing with the romances in this manner, and it can not be avoided. The problem is that the romances appear to be in the wrong medium. These are stories which were told by storytellers to audiences, and which at some time were written down. Therefore we must read a story which, in its form and language, should be listened to. These stories should be accompanied by varying tones of voice and speeds of delivery in addition to gestures of the head, arms and body of the storyteller. There are passages which although they make tedious reading, would probably be much more pleasant if heard spoken. At the same time the passages of verbal fireworks, recognizable from the similarity of their style to that of present-day narrators in Teheran, are flattened out and lose most of their color and excitement. This problem must be kept constantly in mind while reading and studying the romances.

III. Here will be given definitions of terms which will be used frequently in the course of this discussion.

a) Popular and polite literature. This is a fundamental distinction which in its broad sense is clear enough but which lacks an absolutely sharp dividing line. The differences between popular and polite literature for the purposes of this study are linguistic-stylistic on the one hand, and of content, genesis and transmission on the other. Polite literature is written in a learned, conventional, formal style which is in accord with given aesthetic canons. It is consciously created as "art". Its vocabulary is generally more heavily Arabicized than that of popular literature, in any given period, and its syntax more complicated and artificial. Polite literature, in the case of prose, comprises both fiction and non-fiction. Works of belles-lettres such as fables and moralizing tales are common, and on the non-fiction side, history, biography, literary history, philosophy, and ethical works are found. Polite literature is written for the most part by courtiers, bureaucrats or court-supported writers. Its audience is a literate and cultivated elite.

Popular literature appears in a simple style, largely unadorned by the rhetorical devices and stylistic conventions of polite literature. Its language is more natural and close to that of everyday speech. Fewer Arabic words are used than in polite literature of the same period, and the syntax is less complicated. It deals with romantic stories derived from older epics and the stories are not told as fables or allegories. Its emphasis is on action,

not ideas. It is full of popular religious and secular lore, anachronisms, superstitions and folklore. Those examples of it which we have were elaborated by storytellers and told to audiences in public places for entertainment. The greater part of popular literature existed (and still does) only in the minds of people, not in written texts or divāns.

Naturally there is interaction between popular and polite literature. Popular stories and motifs are dressed up and made a part of polite literature, while some of the stylistic conventions of polite literature show their influence in popular literature. Neither exists in isolation from the other, but the extent of this interaction becomes apparent only after a study of the popular romances.

b) Storyteller. Two sorts of storyteller will be distinguished. The first is the creator who tells the story for the first time and oral transmission begins. Written transmission may begin at the same time and the two forms may run parallel, each influencing the other.¹⁰ The second is the naggāl or narrator, who is the present-day professional storyteller working in Teheran and other large Persian cities.

c) Theme and motif. A theme is the basic notion governing a story, such as love, revenge, or good triumphs

¹⁰ M. Gerhardt, The Art of Story-Telling (Leiden, 1963), p. 39.

over evil.¹¹ A motif is a plot element which can be recounted independently from the context, and may pass, identically or with slight variations, from one story to another.¹² Motifs, both large and small, complexes of motifs forming set-pieces, and conventionalized descriptions are all termed narrative elements.

The five romances chosen for study include most of the existing romances of the pre-Safavid era. For this reason, the conclusions reached in chapters IV-VII can be considered valid for the entire body of pre-Safavid popular romances.

The particular copies of the subject romances were selected for study because of their availability in printed form. This does not imply that these are the best or oldest copies of the romances, but only that they are representative copies of romances which in some cases exist in numerous copies in libraries in Europe and Asia. In preparing this study it would not have been feasible to collect and collate all copies of all the romances. The published texts have been subjected to the work of editors whose methods are more or less clearly stated.

Familiar geographical names and Islamic terms have been used in their Anglicized form. Less familiar place names and technical terms have been transcribed according to the appended transliteration table. Translated passages are the work of the writer unless otherwise specified.

11 Ibid., p. 45.

12 Ibid.

Chapter II

The Literary Tradition of the Romances

Our knowledge of popular literature in Iran before the tenth century A.D. is to all intents practically nothing. There are almost no contemporary records from pre-Islamic Iran to indicate what popular literature was like, what it concerned itself with and how it was transmitted. Scraps of information appear in the works of the classical historians but these tell us little about popular literature.¹ The one inference we can safely draw is that stories were told and storytelling was popular as far back as the Achaemenian period. Evidence of stories from the Parthian period has come to us in Athenaeus, where he mentions the story of Zariadres and Zarēr,² and in Vis o Rāmin of Fakhr-e Gorgāni, where the author describes how he took a popular story in the Pahlavi language and improved its literary quality.³

¹ For a different view of the significance of this material, see J. Cejpek, "Iranian Folk-Literature," in J. Rypka, History of Iranian Literature (Dordrecht, 1968), 617-19.

² Athenaeus XIII. See also M. Boyce, "Zariadres and Zarēr," BSOAS, XVII (1955), 463-477.

³ Fakhr al-Din Gorgāni, Vis o Rāmin, ed. M. Mahjub (Teheran, 1337), p. 20-21. For a discussion of the Parthian provenance of this story, see V. Minorsky, "Vis u Ramin - A Parthian Romance," BSOAS, XI(1946), 741-764; XII(1947), 20-35; XVI(1954), 91-92.

From the Sassanian period, direct evidence of popular literature is again lacking, but indirect evidence indicates that many stories were current. Storytelling, as Nafisi says, was one of the main pillars of Pahlavi literature.⁴ This taste for the story we can assume, was inherited from Parthian and Achaemenian times.

Early Persian and Arabic sources, the most important being Mas'udi, Ibn al-Nadim, and the anonymous texts Mojmal al-Tavārikh and Tārikh-e Sistān, indicate that many stories and tales were translated from Pahlavi to Arabic. For example, Mas'udi mentions Paykar Nāma (Ketāb al-Bāykar) about the exploits of Esfandyār, translated into Arabic by Ibn al-Moqaffa',⁵ and the collection of tales called Hezār Afsāna, the Arabic translation of which formed the nucleus of the later Alf Layla va Layla.⁶

From al-Fehrest of Ibn al-Nadim, some of the Pahlavi books translated into Arabic are: Ketāb Khodāynāma, Ketāb Mazdak, Ketāb al-Tāj fi Sirat Anoshirvān, all translated by Ibn al-Moqaffa';⁷ Ketāb Keylohrāsf al-Malek, translated by 'Alī ibn 'Abeyda Reyhāni;⁸ Ketāb al-Vāmeq va al-'Azrā,

⁴ S. Nafisi, Tārikh-e Nazm va Nasr dar Irān (Teheran, 1344), I, 256.

⁵ Les Prairies d'Or, ed. and trans. Barbier de Meynard (Paris, 1962), I, 173.

⁶ *Ibid.* (Paris, 1861-1917), IV, 90.

⁷ Ed. G. Flügel (Leipzig, 1871-72), p. 118.

⁸ *Ibid.* p. 119.

translated by Sahl ibn Hārūn;⁹ Ketāb Rostam va Esfandyār and Ketāb Bahrām Shus (i.e., Chubin?) translated by Jabala ibn Sālem, and the anonymous translations of Ketāb Bahrām va Narsi and Ketāb Anoshirvān;¹⁰ and Ketāb Ardashir Malek Bābol va Arduya (?) Vazirihi.¹¹ These are only a small sample of the stories and tales translated from Pahlavi which are listed by Ibn al-Nadim, and with the exception of the Hezār Afsāna as it has reached us in Alf Layla va Layla, and Vāmeq va 'Azrā, none of them has survived as an independent work.

The author of Tārikh-e Sistān mentions the following books which he used as sources but does not indicate whether they were translated from Pahlavi or originally composed in Persian: Akhbār-e Farāmarz and Akhbār-e Sām,¹² and Ketāb-e Garshāsp.¹³ The author of Mojmal al-Tavārikh also cites Akhbār-e Sām, and in addition Akhbār-e Bahman, Akhbār-e Narimān, Akhbār-e Keykobād, Akhbār-e Afrāsiyāb and Akhbār-e Lohrāsp.¹⁴ These too have all been lost.

Besides these stories of ancient heroes, romances

⁹ Ibid., p. 120.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 305.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 304.

¹² Ed. M. T. Bahār (Teheran, 1314), p. 7.

¹³ Ibid., pp. 1, 5.

¹⁴ Ed. M. T. Bahār (Teheran, 1318), p. 2.

and love stories were also popular. Al-Biruni himself is reported to have translated four romances from Persian into Arabic.¹⁵

In the Middle-Persian non-religious literature which has survived the main characteristics of oral literature can be discerned.¹⁶ Most of this literature is anonymous, and there is free plagiarism and a general stylistic sameness which makes it impossible to trace the contribution of any individual. It is Boyce's opinion that only late in the Sassanian period did literature begin to evolve from an oral to a written form.¹⁷

From the abundance of stories reported to have been translated from Middle Persian, and the surviving fragments,¹⁸ it is clear that there was a long tradition of storytelling behind the popular romances as we know them today. If all the texts mentioned in Mojmal al-Tavārikh and Tārikh-e Sistān were translations from the Middle Persian, then it is highly probable that they also formed part of the body of popular literature which was trans-

¹⁵ Z. Safā, Tārikh-e Adabiyāt dar Irān (Teheran, 1341), I, 283. The stories are: Qessa-e Shād Bahr va 'Ayn al-Hayāt (also mentioned in Mojmal al-Tavārikh, ed. M. Bahār (Teheran, 1318), p. 92, Sorkh Bot va Kheng Bot, Ormozdyār va Mehryār, and Dādmah va Gerāmidokht.

¹⁶ M. F. Boyce, "Middle Persian Literature," in Handbuch der Orientalistik, ed. B. Spuler, I, IV, ii, 32.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 31.

¹⁸ E.g., the Āyātkār-e Zarērān.

mitted orally from generation to generation. Any conclusion in this respect must be speculative, however, for we have almost nothing which points directly to the existence of a popular literature. Its existence can safely be inferred but little can be said of its character.

Chapter III

Major Motifs

Warlike Women: Burān Dokht and Anahita

Introduction

The warlike woman as a minor character appears with relative frequency in Iranian literature. When a woman is presented as being warlike, she is usually a match for any but the very greatest heroes. She is, in Lady Macbeth's words, unsexed, and becomes a ferocious virago, a Brunhilde who is all but invincible. She dons armor, wields a sword, brandishes a heavy club, rides a charger and engages in single combat like any hero. Sometimes she shouts a war-cry loud enough to intimidate the enemy by its very volume, to say nothing of the dreadful threats contained in it.

In Iranian literature of the Islamic period, probably the most familiar of the warlike women is Gordāfarid, the belligerent daughter of Gozhdaham, in Shāhnāma. When Sohrāb reaches the borders of Iran he must destroy the Dezh-e Sefid before he can proceed on his way. Gordāfarid rides out dressed as a warrior, calls for Sohrāb to meet her in single combat, and is unhorsed by him. He sees her long hair as her helmet falls off and as the heroes usually do, falls in love with her at first sight. She tricks him however; she eludes capture, saves the occu-

pants of the fort, and is never again seen by the lovesick Sohrāb. Thus hers is the final victory, even though Sohrāb was too mighty a fighter to be defeated in single combat by anyone less than his father Rostam.

Another such woman in Shāhnāma, this time within the historical period, is Gordia, the sister of Bahrām Chubin. Massé would include Jarira, the Turanian wife of Siāvush, who burns her palace, destroys all the war horses, and kills herself over the body of her son.¹

In the secondary epics the warlike woman appears with increasing frequency. It is characteristic of this literature that as it draws farther away from its epic model, the warlike woman assumes a greater role. There is even a short secondary epic about Bānu Goshāsp, a daughter of Rostam.² Bānu Goshāsp causes her husband such grief that the presence of Rostam is required to put their domestic affairs in order.

The motif of the warlike woman appears in several of the Persian stories of 1001 Nights, for example, "The Tale of Prince Behram and the Princess al-Datma,"³ the "Tale of Ali Nur al-Din and Miriam,"⁴ and "The Tale of Hasan of

¹ Les Epopées persanes (Paris, 1953), p. 164.

² For a description of this work, see Z. Şafā, Hamāsa Sarā'i dar Irān (Teheran, 1333), pp. 300-302.

³ The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night, trans. R. F. Burton (Bernares, 1885; reprinted Denver, 1900), VI, 184.

⁴ *Ibid.*, VIII, 264.

Bussorah."⁵ A warlike woman plays a part in the Arabic romance of 'Antar.⁶ This motif is a familiar one in literature other than Iranian, and is well known in European folklore from such collections as the Niebelungenlied. Geissler states that the motif originated in the Asian steppes and reached Europe through India.⁷ He offers no proof of this however, so the question of its ultimate origin must be put aside for the present.

In the Persian popular romances this kind of woman plays a prominent role. In Geṣṣa-e Ḥamza for example, Mehr Negār tries to play at 'ayyāri. Because of her inexperience she quickly gets into trouble and has to be rescued by 'Omar Omayya.⁸ In this case she is within the literary tradition because in the epic literature and its derivatives, which are not concerned with the common man, the female fighters are all of the upper class. The tradition is continued in Firuz Shāh Nāma where the princess 'Ayn al-Ḥayāt on several occasions becomes warlike. Early in the story, for example, she is overwhelmed by a desire to see Firuz Shāh, who is in a distant room in the palace. She puts on special "night-prowling" clothes, takes up her sword and rope and sets out with her companion across the palace roof. On the first of her nocturnal ventures, she

⁵ Ibid., VIII, 7.

⁶ F. Geissler, Brautwerbung in der Weltliteratur (Halle, 1955), p. 58.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 55-63.

⁸ I, 204-205.

kills a guard. The next night she is prowling again and kills four guards, splitting one from the top of the head to the waist.⁹ On the last such adventure she kills seven. From time to time throughout the story she acts in this manner, but only in unusual situations. Ordinarily she is a model of feminine modesty and decorum.

In Firuz Shāh Nāma there is an incident in the story of Behzād where Gol Buy, princess of Damascus, rides out to rescue Behzād from her father's troops. She is fully armed and handles herself like a man in every respect, laying about with her sword and saving the hero from certain death. She takes Behzād back to her palace and hides him there, but will not let him look upon her face. She has pledged herself to another and could not conceive of such an impropriety.

In Samak-e 'Ayyār the situation changes and we have common women taking a warlike role. Two of Samak's associates in 'ayyāri are women. These are young women who admire Samak, himself a man of the people, for his prowess as an 'ayyār and his qualities of javānmardi. In all respects they are the equals of the male 'ayyārs in skill, resourcefulness and endurance. Samak even marries one of them. Thus the tradition is extended to include commoners, women of humble background, motivated by the ideals of 'ayyāri and javānmardi.

It must be emphasized that whenever the warlike woman

⁹ Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 141.

appears in Persian literature, be it polite or popular, she is generally a conventional woman occasionally inclined to rash acts. In no case, with the exception of what follows, does the warlike woman persist in this kind of activity for long periods. Similarly, women as characters are never thought of by the storyteller or the other characters as being warlike. This is not a quality which was cultivated, sought after or admired in women. One would not expect it to be common in stories which were set in Islamic Iran, for whatever the condition of women was before Islam, their position vis-a-vis men in Islamic times is clearly enough stated in the Koran. The warlike woman as a motif in Islamic Persian literature is an unexpected one and its presence here may be ascribed partly to the survival of a pre-Islamic tradition and partly to the widespread distribution of this theme in world folklore.

The Story of Burān Dokht from Dārāb Nāma

With this as a preface, we may now turn to an outstanding exception to what has been said above. This is the story of Burān Dokht in Dārāb Nāma. A brief sketch of the career of Burān Dokht will be necessary to provide the background for further analysis.

The Qeysar (emperor) of Rum and Queen Homāy of Iran have been battling. Dārāb returns from his lengthy overseas journey and after rejoining his mother, Homāy, is crowned king by her as she relinquishes the throne. Dārāb

attacks the Qeysar and forces him to surrender. The normal practice now in the romances would be to keep the captured king prisoner until he is rescued by his 'ayyārs or until some mutually agreeable solution is worked out between the two monarchs. The spilling of royal blood is a serious offence and is never undertaken lightly.

In this case Dārāb and Homāy decide to free the Qeysar on the grounds that he and they are related. Homāy says, "We will pardon you . . . because you are of the race of Feridun and he [Dārāb] is a descendant of Key Qobād. On the Day of Judgement there should not be enmity between Feridun and Key Qobād."¹⁰ Later it is established that Feylaqus who will be the grandfather of Alexander, is the brother of the Qeysar.¹¹ Thus it is made clear even before the birth of Alexander that the ruling family of Rum is related to the Iranian royal line.

The Qeysar dies of anger and grief after being made to do forced labor for Dārāb, and his brother Feylaqus becomes the ruler of Rum. After some fighting Dārāb is in a position to demand tribute from Rum but the only thing he wants is the daughter of Feylaqus. Feylaqus agrees to this. Dārāb marries the princess of Rum but because of her bad breath sends her back to her father. She is pregnant, and gives birth in secret to Alexander.

¹⁰ Dārāb Nama, I, 350.

¹¹ Loc. cit., and 358.

Accordingly, Alexander is related to the Iranian royal house both on his father's, i.e., Dārāb's side, and on his mother's side, through Feylaqus back to Feridun. In this version the families are more closely related than in the other versions, which give no Iranian genealogy for Alexander's mother.

Dārāb has a son Dārāb by another wife, and he and his half-brother Alexander eventually meet on the battlefield as Dārāb lies mortally wounded by the daggers of his two traitorous officers. In his last moments Dārāb makes three requests of Alexander, one of which is to marry his daughter. Alexander agrees to carry out these wishes of Dārāb's. From here on the story diverges again from the better-known version of Pseudo-Callisthenes.

The text of Dārāb Nāma says this: "They say that he [Dārāb] had an extremely beautiful and accomplished daughter who had no peer in her time, and at eighteen years of age had the face¹² of Siāvakhsh and the farr of Hushang, and in strength and bravery resembled Esfandyār. She had, however, a light moustache on her lip such that whoever saw her thought that she was a man. She wielded a club weighing 250 mans. Dārāb loved his daughter very much and had taught her all the arts which befitted a prince. This girl was Burān Dokht,¹³ and according to another story was called Rowshanak. They called her Burān Dokht because she

¹² Surat.

¹³ Another MS has Purān Dokht.

had a moustache. And she feared no man."¹⁴ Here then is a girl whose principal merits are beauty, strength, fearlessness, and curiously, a moustache. Every other princess is described in the most elaborate terms as being beautiful, delicate, maidenly, modest and well protected from the world of men, and is never credited with the male qualities which Burān Dokht has.

When Burān Dokht learns of the death of her father, she swears vengeance on Alexander because she believes, rightly, that he paid the two assassins. She makes known her resolve and when Alexander hears of it, his vizier Aristotle advises him to treat her kindly. Burān Dokht sets about to raise an army to fight Alexander and gains the support of the Persian nobles. With a hundred and twenty thousand men she marches on Alexander and is decisively defeated. Fleeing the field, she takes refuge in a walled enclosure beside a spring. While she is resting there with a few followers, a Persian army happens to pass by and she recruits it to fight Alexander again. This time she is victorious, and declares that she will fight to keep Alexander from conquering Iran.

In their next encounter she decides to retreat and save her forces for an attack upon Rum itself. Up to now the fighting has taken place near Baghdad, and when Burān Dokht decides that retreat is the safest policy, she turns

West and heads for Aleppo. She and her force reach the Euphrates, which presents a difficult obstacle to cross. Burān Dokht prays at the water's edge and then rides her horse into the river. She and those loyal to her cross the river safely, while all the traitors, spies and enemies in her army drown.

After extended fighting she captures the fortress of Aleppo from Alexander's men. Alexander has remained in Baghdad and is unaware of the loss of Aleppo, clearly an important frontier station. Alexander sends his treasure caravan to Rum via Aleppo and Burān Dokht captures it. She writes to Alexander in Baghdad to give him the news and Alexander is at a loss, not knowing what to do. As we shall see elsewhere, in this story Alexander is shown as a weak and vacillating world-conqueror, lacking imagination and the ordinary qualities of leadership. Burān Dokht has all the qualities which Alexander should have. At this point Alexander is frustrated because he lacks advice, having sent Aristotle, his principal advisor, to Istakhr with a letter to Burān Dokht's mother Ābān Dokht.

Meanwhile Burān Dokht has gone to Khuzestan to capture Alexander's herds and flocks. Alexander learns of this and sets out to find her. Their armies clash and Alexander captures her. Now, both because he has promised Dārāb to carry out his last wish and marry his daughter, and because he would rather be at peace than at war, Alex-

ander asks Burān Dokht to marry him. He and his nobles try their best to persuade her, but she refuses. "It would be better for me to be cut to pieces. How could I, who am descended from seven generations of kings, marry a fatherless Rumi? Has the hawk ever made peace with the owl?"¹⁵ Alexander turns her over to two executioners to be killed, but they are loyal Persians and risk their lives to set her free. She returns to Aleppo.

More fighting follows. Burān Dokht dons Dārāb's armor and takes the field at Aleppo. Once while fighting alone against Alexander's army she is forced back toward the fortress. Reaching the edge of the moat, she is able to cross it while Alexander's men can not do so. Later the battle turns against her and she breaks through Alexander's army and flees to the east, toward Baghdad. When she comes to a river, she dismounts to wash and pray, then she crosses the river.

Burān Dokht rests in Baghdad, then proceeds to Istakhr, capturing Alexander's messenger to Aristotle along the way. She captures the fortress of Istakhr where her mother lives, and to settle a family quarrel, she kills her mother. She ascends the throne and proclaims herself queen of Iran. Alexander arrives with his army and prolonged and bitter fighting follows, which ends with Alexander retiring to Isfahan. Burān Dokht writes him advising him to leave

¹⁵ I have rearranged the order of the sentences. The original of the last reads:

مرگنر باز با چند قرار کرده است ؟

Iran for Rum. Feeling that Istakhr is now secure, Burān Dokht decides to return to Aleppo, but Alexander intercepts her and sets upon her with many men. She flees to a mountain, where she rests, prays and washes by a spring. Whenever she stops to rest, pray and wash, she asks for renewed strength, and it is always granted. As she is resting by this particular spring, a herd of antelope passes by and she kills one and eats it. After more fighting Burān Dokht retreats to a cave. For a long while the Rumi soldiers are afraid to enter, but finally Alexander and some companions pursue her there until she disappears behind a locked door which Alexander can not open.

She makes her way to Istakhr, recaptures the fortress which she had lost to Alexander during the cave episode, and again sets out for Aleppo. In Baghdad Alexander recognizes her and she must go into hiding. She disguises herself as one Bahman, a Persian warrior loyal to Alexander, and enters his service. To prove her worth she offers Alexander her club to try but he is unable to lift it. Together they return to Aleppo and through spies and loyal advisors, she arranges a night attack on Alexander's army. In the battle Alexander is unhorsed and thrown into a ditch, and Burān Dokht as Bahman rescues him. There is more fighting in the following days and in the end she reveals her true identity to Alexander and defeats him. He returns to Istakhr and she follows him. She gains control of the fortress again, and while things are relative-

ly quiet, goes alone to the nearby hills to find a female companion who has fought by her side. Burān Dokht finds her and brings her food. The friend suggests they go to the nearby water to eat and drink. "Then both of them went to the water and ate their food. Anṭuṭiyya said, 'Queen, come, let us go into the water and wash ourselves and then return to the castle.' They took off their clothes to enter the water, but Alexander arrived and saw both of them naked. He shouted and said, 'I have found you!'¹⁶ The girls hastened to put their clothes back on. Burān Dokht said, 'Alexander! Since you have seen me naked from head to toe, I will fight you no more.' Then both of them returned with Alexander to the army camp. Burān Dokht took Alexander's hand, seated him on the throne and hailed him as king. Alexander praised Burān Dokht."¹⁶

Now the story returns to the general pattern of the Pseudo-Callisthenes version. Alexander has previously declared his intention to travel around the world, seek the water of life, and converse with sages. He installs Burān Dokht as queen of Iran and starts off for India with the avowed purpose of smashing all the idol-temples and converting the people to the "way of God." He gets no further than Sistan before running into trouble. He loses a lot of his men to cannibals in the desert and with the forces he has left he proceeds to Kashmir where he encoun-

¹⁶ Dārāb Nāma, MS fol. 220b.

ters Keyd, the king of India. Alexander says that he has not come to India for treasure but only for the religion of Islam.¹⁷ There is a lot of fighting and Alexander can not hold out against the superior numbers of the Indians. He sends a message to Burān Dokht in Istakhr to send reinforcements. She has an army of a hundred thousand ready for an attack on Rum but she changes her plans and sets out with them for India.

When Burān Dokht arrives in India to help Alexander, her principal role in the story begins to unfold. She enters the battle at once and captures the Indian king and his warlike daughter. The fighting continues at a brisk pace and Burān Dokht is the mainstay of the Persian army. In one battle she singlehandedly kills ninety, then fifty-five elephants. Alexander is ineffective as a general and needs constant advice on strategy and tactics. Burān Dokht provides the strength on the battlefield and Aristotle and an Indian sage advise Alexander behind the lines. Burān Dokht is not only a fighter however. Once some important prisoners are captured and refuse to reveal their identity. An elaborate test is designed for them which consists in part of asking them to interpret a dream which Burān Dokht has had, in which a white eagle came to her. Thus she is able to aid Alexander in non-military ways as well.

In further fighting against the Indians Alexander

¹⁷ Ibid., 223a.

falls captive and Burān Dokht rescues him. The campaign drags on and neither side can gain the advantage. Burān Dokht is on the opposite side of the river from her army and learns of enemy plans for a night attack on Alexander. She is able miraculously to cross the water to warn her army. Still more fighting follows and this time Burān Dokht is overwhelmed and captured by an Indian hero. This hero, named Jomhur, has the unusual faculty of being able to remain alive under water for twenty-four hours. Later he releases her following a prophetic dream which he has had. No sooner is she set free, however, than she is recaptured and forced into domestic servitude. She must carry a water-pitcher to an Indian prince and a warlike female he has with him so that they may wash their hands. She sees her opportunity, kills the woman with the water pitcher and fights her way out of the palace. The guards wound her but she manages to reach the river's edge and throw herself in. The river carries her underwater for some distance and casts her up in a meadow, there to recover from her wounds.

Shortly after Burān Dokht's deliverance from the enemy by the mysterious action of the river, this first phase of Alexander's Indian campaign ends. Together with their army and a battery of native sages, Alexander and Burān Dokht proceed to different parts of India. In one adventure they reach a mountain completely surrounded by water, and Alexander wants to explore it. The water sur-

rounding the mountain is full of fish which are there to assist anyone who possesses the farr. Alexander gazes into the water and the fish are attracted to him because of his farr, but when Burān Dokht looks into the water all the fish desert Alexander and flock to her, so much more dominant is her farr. They learn that the castle on the mountain is the abode of wizards, and Burān Dokht challenges them. It begins to rain at once and rains for ten days, but she is able to defeat them and stop the rain.

The Indian campaign ends and Alexander sails for Yemen. Along the way he converts all the peoples whom he meets, and they become his allies. They reach Mecca and there Alexander smashes the idols in the Ka'ba and converts the population. He now prepares for his campaign in the West and the search for the water of life. He sends Burān Dokht back to Iran with all his treasure. Loqmān, Khezr and Elyās come to guide Alexander, and he and Burān Dokht part, never to meet again. At the end of his expedition to the West, Alexander dies in Jerusalem and Burān Dokht dies a year later in Iran.

Analysis

Thus we have in brief the story of Burān Dokht from Dārāb Nāma. In this survey a great deal of irrelevant and repetitious detail was omitted and certain aspects were emphasized. Three things are significant in this account, and these three may lead us to an understanding of what

lies behind this story. First there is the strangeness of the story itself. We find an Iranian princess who fights against Alexander with some success. Later she marries him and fights with him so manfully that her prowess on the battlefield overshadows his and shows Alexander in a most unusual light. She is not only a fighter, but an advisor and organizer as well.

There is no other story like this in Iranian literature. We have seen that the warlike woman is a minor motif which appears fairly frequently but which never assumes primary importance. In fact this seems almost to be an un-Iranian story, so at odds is it with literary and historical tradition. The aspect of the story in which Alexander is played down and made to be an ineffectual figure will be discussed in another section. Here we are concerned mainly with the mythical woman who plays such an important role in the story. What suggests itself is that Burān Dokht is like a protective goddess, some sort of divine figure sent to help Alexander and the Iranians.

The second impression gained from this story is the frequent association of Burān Dokht with water. This association is as unusual as it is frequent, for it is not the rule in Islamic Iranian literature for any character to be closely associated with an element. The exceptions are figures from popular Islamic legends, like Loqmān who frequently appears walking on the water. Khezr is dressed

in green and is also sometimes associated with water, but these are of a different order than Burān Dokht.

Early in the story of Burān Lokht we find her taking refuge in a walled enclosure by a spring. Later she safely crosses the Euphrates while all those disloyal to her drown. Her mother is called Ābān Dokht (i.e., Daughter of the Waters?). When retreating from Alexander's attack at Aleppo she is able to cross the castle moat while none of the enemy can. She flees from Aleppo and again stops, prays, and washes by a river. When she is trapped by Alexander's forces on a mountain near Istakhr she rests, washes and prays by a spring. There she finds food in the form of a herd of antelope which passes closely enough for her to kill one. Then comes the climactic moment when Alexander finds her bathing in a stream and she ceases to oppose him. At this point she agrees to do what she previously said she would never do, i.e., marry Alexander.

During the Indian campaign she miraculously crosses a river to warn the Persians of a coming night attack. Later she is captured, then released by an Indian who has the ability to remain alive under water for twenty-four hours. When she is captured a second time by the Indians she kills one of them, a woman, with a water pitcher which she has been forced to carry as a servant. Fighting her way out of the palace, she jumps into the river and is carried underwater to a meadow where she is cast up and

remains safe. Finally, the fish in the water surrounding the wizards' mountain all desert Alexander when Burān Dokht approaches them with her superior farr.

These associations are too consistent to be mere accidents of storytelling. In Iranian stories when a character is human, he behaves in a generally human manner. There are well-known and allowable exaggerations; some characters do things which seem at times superhuman, but whenever this occurs it is consistent with the character's role, his relation to the Divine or his possession of the farr. Never is a character who has no plausible reason for such an association, so consistently identified with one of the elements. Why then should Burān Dokht be so frequently associated with water?

The third feature which strikes one, and which could not easily be brought out in the summary of her career, is Burān Dokht's enthusiastic support of Alexander the Conqueror as contrasted with her obvious lack of support for Alexander the Islamic Crusader. In his military efforts she is his bravest fighter. She fearlessly attacks the foe when Alexander would prefer to avoid a fight. She commands his army in major campaigns, fights in single combat against enemy heroes, engages in independent military activity without the knowledge or consent of Alexander, and when there is a lull in the fighting, gives Alexander advice. Alexander's role in Dārāb Nāma however is

a dual one for he is not merely rampaging all over the known world for personal gain and fame, but he has a religious motive as well. His purpose is to destroy idols, smash temples, uproot paganism and bring people back to the straight path of Islam. It is in this latter activity that he gets almost no support from Burān Dokht.

These three aspects of the story of Burān Dokht, that is, the very unusual situation of having a warlike female as a main character, the association of this female with water, and her disassociation from Alexander when he is acting in his religious capacity, strongly suggest that Burān Dokht is a popular representation of the ancient Iranian goddess Anahita.

The external evidence is equally suggestive. In Yasht V (Ābān Yasht), dedicated to Anahita, we read (V:64), "Ardvi Sūra Anāhita hastened unto him in the shape of a maid, fair of body, most strong, tall-formed, high-girded, pure, nobly born of a glorious race." This same description is repeated in V:78 and V:126, and is very reminiscent of the description of Buran Dokht in Dārāb Nāma (p. 31-32 above).

That Anahita is a fertility goddess, and a goddess of water is well known. In the same Yasht, we read of Ahura Mazda saying, (V:1) "Offer up a sacrifice, O Spitama Zarathustra! unto this spring of mine, Ardvi Sūra Anāhita . . . (V:2) who makes the seed of all males pure, who makes the womb of all females pure for bringing forth, who

makes all females bring forth in safety . . . (V:3) the large river, known afar, that is as large as the whole of the waters that run along the earth."

Ahura Mazda continues, (V:5) "from this river of mine alone flow all the waters that spread all over the seven Karshvares; this river of mine alone goes on bringing waters, both in summer and in winter. This river of mine purifies the seed in males, the womb in females, the milk in females' breasts."

In this Yasht Anahita has another aspect too. (V:7) "Beautiful were her white arms, thick as a horse's shoulder or still thicker . . . And then she came, strong, with thick arms." Anahita is she (V:11) "who drives forwards on her chariot, holding the reins of the chariot. She goes, driving, on this chariot." She is (V:13) "whom four horses carry, all white . . . tall, crushing down the hates of all haters, of the Daēvas and men . . . of the oppressors. It is she who grants boons to the Iranian heroes that they may smite the Daēvas and their mortal enemies. Haoshyangha, Yima Khshaēta, Thraētaona, Keresāspa, Kavi Usa, Husravah, Tusa are some of the heroes who sacrificed to her, and to whom she granted boons. When Azhi Dahāka and Frangrasyan sacrificed to her to gain the power to pursue their evil designs, she denied the boons. Ahura Mazda says to her, (V:86) "The men of strength [i.e., the warriors] will beg of thee swift horses and supremacy

of Glory . . . (V:53) To her did the valiant warrior Tusa offer worship on the back of his horse, begging swiftness for his teams, health for his own body, and that he might watch with full success those who hated him, smite down his foes, and destroy at one stroke his adversaries, his enemies, and those who hated him."¹⁸ Thus we see in the Yasht dedicated to her that she is worshipped both as a fertility and water goddess, and as a war goddess who can bring victory to the Iranian heroes. She is a protective goddess who denies victory to the enemies of Iran while assuring it to her own heroes. There is however, a large gap between the Anahita of Yasht V and Burān Dokht, and we shall see how this gap was bridged.

The Iranian religious tradition never went as far as did the national tradition in refurbishing the reputation of Alexander. While the national tradition Persianized Alexander, as we shall see below, the religious tradition did and still does consider him an evil force. For example, in the commentary on the Bahman Yasht (III:34) we read: "And then Mitrō . . . cries thus: 'of these nine thousand years' support, which during its beginning produced Dahāk of evil religion, Frāsīyāv of Tur, and Alexander the Rūman'."¹⁹ The mention of Alexander with Azhi Dahāka and Frangrasyan as the three most evil enemies of

¹⁸ Zend-Avesta, trans. J. Darmesteter (Oxford, 1883), p. 52-84.

¹⁹ "Bahman Yast," SBE, V, 228.

Iran appears also in the Dadestān-ī Mainōg-i Khrad where it is stated, "And Aharman so contemplated that Bēvarāsp and Frāsīyāk and Alexander should be immortal, but Aūhar-mazd, for great advantage, so altered them as that which is declared."²⁰ The Dēnkird holds him in no better repute. "And after the devastation occurred, owing to the evil-destined and raging villain Alexander, there was not so much of them [the sacred texts] recovered as would be possible for a high-priest to preserve."²¹ Also from the same source, "Also Alexander of the devastators . . . a deadly king in the impenitent world, who is the evil-destined Alexander."²² He is called "cursed" in the Shahrestānhā-e Irān,²³ and in a Persian Rivāyat of the seventeenth century we read the same estimate of Alexander. "At present, since the Nasks have not remained perfect in the midst of us, it is not possible to solemnize them, because Alexander the Ruman carried off a rough draft . . . and repeatedly burnt the books of the Avesta."²⁴

²⁰ VIII:29, in SBE, XXIV, 35. This and the preceding references from J. J. Modi, "Alexander the Great," in his Oriental Conference Papers (Bombay, 1932), p. 58.

²¹ VIII:1, in SBE, XXXVII, 9.

²² VII:7, in SBE, XLVII, 83.

²³ Ṣ. Hedāyat, "Shahrestānhā-e Irānshahr," in his Neveshtahā-e Parākanda (Teheran, 1344), p. 415.

²⁴ Rivāyat of Dastur Barzu Qiyamu-d-Din, verse 23, in SBE, XXXVII, 437.

It is entirely possible that traces of this feeling about Alexander survived in the popular mind at the time when Dārāb Nāma was being composed. This could account in part for the ambiguous picture of Alexander presented in Dārāb Nāma. In this romance we have neither the brilliant conqueror of the Pseudo-Callisthenes and Shāhnāma tradition, nor the wise sage of Neẓāmi, nor do we have the evil villain of the Pahlavi texts. In Dārāb Nāma we have an Alexander who has become strongly Islamicized and at the same time has lost many of his traditional heroic qualities. He often shows a hopeless irresolution, a disinclination to fight and a tendency to distrust his advisors and put his faith in charlatans. Here his alter-ego, so to speak, is Burān Dokht, who fills in the deficiencies in the character which he is traditionally supposed to have.

We have records of the Anahita cult in Iran from Achaemenian times to the present day. The fact of this continuity is important for our purpose here. It is known that Artaxerxes II caused the cult of Anahita to flourish.²⁵ Exactly what form of belief the cult had is unclear, but it is known that he established shrines in Susa, Ecbatana, and elsewhere. The cult thus established

²⁵ A. T. Olmstead, History of the Persian Empire (Chicago, 1960), pp. 423, 471, 479. See also Old Persian inscription A²Sa: "By the favor of Ahuramazda, Anaitis, and Mithras, this palace I built. May Ahuramazda, Anaitis, and Mithras protect me from all evil, and that which I have built may they not shatter nor harm." R. Kent, Old Persian, p. 154.

spread beyond the borders of Iran proper and took root in Armenia, Asia Minor and elsewhere, and occupied an important position wherever it was. According to Ghirshman, under the Parthians it became predominant over the worship of Ahura Mazda and Mithra.²⁶

It is unquestionable that during the Achaemenian period Anahita was a water and fertility goddess, but was also a goddess of warriors. This is borne out by Yasht V in which we see her in both of these aspects.²⁷ Her widespread popularity in the Parthian period is attested to in several sources. For example Tiridates I was crowned in a temple of Anahita at Arsah.²⁸ The Ābān Yasht gives us an incomplete picture of what the Anahita cult must have been like however, because the evidence of Wikander shows that there was probably a widespread Daevic cult of Anahita in Armenia. He has shown that there is a large body of Middle Iranian words which were borrowed into Armenian, most of which have not sur-

²⁶ R. Ghirshman, Iran (Baltimore, 1961), p. 269.

²⁷ Yasht V probably dates from the period of Artaxerxes II or slightly later. See I. Gershevitch, "Old Iranian Literature," in Handbuch der Orientalistik, ed. B. Spuler (Leiden, 1968), I, IV, ii, 20.

²⁸ Ghirshman, loc. cit.

vived in Iranian dialects.²⁹ These words are largely concerned with the Anahita cult and are Daevic, not Ahuric.³⁰ This indicates that the "official" version of the Anahita cult and the popular or "folk" version were quite different, and that the popular cult was most certainly of a Daevic form. Anahita had become a war goddess. Another proof of the strength of the Anahita cult in Armenia during Parthian times is the existence of place names in western Iran which are eastern in form, and all of which appear in Yasht V.³¹ Furthermore Frye quotes Plutarch as saying in his biography of Artaxerxes II that the new king was initiated at a sanctuary of a militant goddess, probably Anahita.³² The point here is that Plutarch lived a long time after Artaxerxes II and his designation of the goddess of the sanctuary as "militant" probably reflects the reputation of Anahita at the time Plutarch wrote. It must also be remembered that Anahita was an extremely syncretistic goddess, and that although the evidence is strongly in his favor, still Plutarch was only making an educated guess.

²⁹ S. Wikander, Feuerpriester in Kleinasien und Iran (Lund, 1946), pp. 91-101.

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 123-24.

³¹ Ibid., pp. 173-74.

³² R. N. Frye, The Heritage of Persia (Cleveland, 1963), p. 92. See also Chaumont, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

The evidence for there being a cult of Anahita as a war goddess does not stop with the Parthian period. It is known that Ardashir, after his victory over Ardavan, offered the heads of his conquered enemies in the temple of Anahita in Fars.³³ Shapur II did the same with the heads of Christians executed in Fars,³⁴ and Chaumont states that Anahita was the only one among all the gods to whom heads were offered in the temple.³⁵

Anahita was also closely connected with royalty and the legitimacy of kingship. Göbl has investigated investiture scenes on Sassanian coins and has identified Anahita or her symbol as being present on coins depicting the investiture of Ardashir I, Shapur I, Hormozd I (some question), Bahman II, Narse, Hormozd II, Shapur II (some question) and Shapur III.³⁶ The latest evidence from Sassanian times is a rock relief at Taq-e Bustan showing Anahita present at the investiture of Khosrow Parviz (590-628); although there is not unanimous agreement about this identification.³⁷ Lukonin in Iran II shows six illustrations of articles of Sassanian silver with the figure of

³³ Chaumont, op. cit., p. 158.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 159.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 160.

³⁶ R. Göbl, "Investitur im sassanidischen Iran," Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, LVI (1960), 47.

³⁷ Wikander, p.54.

Anahita on them, all tentatively dated as fifth-sixth century, and one dated merely as "late Sassanian."³⁸ Thus all through the Sassanian period the cult of Anahita flourished. It was clearly identified with the investiture of kings in one aspect, and was a warlike cult in another aspect. In addition, some effort seems to have been made to re-emphasize her older character as a fertility and water goddess. Lukonin says, "Le grand prêtre de Chapur II, Aturpāt . . . transforma la nature du culte d'Anāhitā, en associant plus étroitement la déesse au culte de la végétation, des fleurs, de l'eau . . ."³⁹ Consequently we can see that Anahita had three main functions and that these were probably given different emphasis at different periods. There was undoubtedly a folk cult as well, and its character can only be guessed at from later evidence.

An important element in the iconography of Anahita is that she is often associated with an eagle, a hawk or other bird of prey. This is true of her images on Sassanian coins and this association also appears on silver plates and vessels such as Lukonin's plate 195 which shows a late Sassanian plate with Anahita being held by the giant bird Garuda. It will be recalled that in the text, Burān Dokht compares herself with a hawk or falcon (bāz) when

³⁸ (Paris, 1967), plates 172, 181, 183-84, 189, 195.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 183.

she says, "Has the hawk ever made peace with the owl?"⁴⁰

Furthermore the text describes Burān Dokht as having a dream in which a white eagle comes to her (p. 37 above). We have also seen that Burān Dokht is possessed of the farr (p. 39 above). The white eagle of her dream undoubtedly is a representation of the farr coming to her.

The proof of this is clear. In Yasht XIX:35-38, the farr is described as leaving Yima three times, each time "in the shape of a Vāragna bird."⁴¹ Avestan vāragna- became Khwarezmian w'rnyk, which is glossed by al-Zamakhshari as Ar. zorraq "white sparrow-hawk", Pers. shāhin "royal falcon, sparrow-hawk", bāz-e sepid "white falcon". Thus the farr is clearly identified with a white bird of prey, a falcon or hawk. The white eagle which came to Buran Dokht can be none other than this same vāragna- which represented the farr leaving Yima.

With the coming of Islam to Iran, the official cults of Anahita rapidly disappeared. The memory lingered on in the popular mind however, and seems to survive even to this day.

Bāstāni Pārizi has identified a large number of place names in present-day Iran as possibly having a reference to the cult of Anahita, due to the presence of such words as dokhtar "girl, daughter", khātun "lady" and other terms

⁴⁰ See note 15 above.

⁴¹ "Zamyād Yast," SBE, XXIII, 294-95.

for females, e.g., Pol-e Dokhtar, Qal'a-e Dokhtar, etc.⁴²

As might be expected, some of the old Anahita shrines were adapted to Moslem legend, and Boyce's research shows that today in the vicinity of Yazd there is a mountain shrine to a local saintly female which most probably represents an old shrine to Anahita. "There is still living evidence for the cult of the goddess there," she says.⁴³

Returning to the question of Burān Dokht, from the above evidence we can properly conclude that the figure of Burān Dokht represents a popular survival of the belief in the goddess Anahita in all three of the functions which she had in the Sassanian era. First, Burān Dokht is frequently associated with water and springs, more so than any other character in any other of the popular romances. Her identification with water is clear in the Ābān Yasht, and Burān Dokht's mother is named, curiously enough, Ābān Dokht. The scene where Alexander finds her bathing naked in a stream can be interpreted as a symbolic visit of Alexander to an Anahita shrine, probably the major shrine at Istakhr, since in Dārāb Nāma the event takes place in the mountains just outside that city. After this visit to the Anahita shrine, Alexander secures her aid. Burān Dokht stops fighting him, joins with him, and in the story they

⁴² E. Bāstāni Pārīzi, Khātun-e Haft Qal'a (Teheran, 1344), pp. 203-321. The conclusions put forth in this essay must be accepted with extreme caution.

⁴³ M. Boyce, "Bibi Shahrbanu and the Lady of Pars," BSOAS, XXX(1967), 39.

actually marry. This occurs immediately before Alexander is to leave Iran for India, and the Iranian goddess will make it possible for him to carry out his grand scheme of seeing the world, meeting with sages and converting the people to "the path of God."

Her second function, that of being present at the investiture of a king and thus conferring a legitimacy or divine approval upon him, is clearly stated in the story. After Alexander catches her bathing, i.e., visits her shrine, she takes him by the hand, seats him on the throne, and hails him as king.⁴⁴

Her third function, that of a war goddess who bestows victory on her worshippers, is amply illustrated throughout the whole story. Twice she saves Alexander when he has been unhorsed. She rescues him from captivity, leads his army or her own, fights in single combat and is a model of the brave and warlike hero.

In conclusion it may be pointed out that this is a good example of how strong popular religious tradition must have been in pre-Safavid times. After the rise of the Safavids and their official efforts to promote Shi'ism, the Alexander story was retold in a much different form and Burān Dokht no longer played a role in it.

⁴⁴ Dārāb Nāma, MS fol. 220a.

The Motif of Bad Breath

The unusual motif of a bride rejected because of her bad breath appears in some of the Iranian versions of the Alexander romance. Its context is as follows. After Darius has conquered Philip of Macedon he makes the usual demands for treasure and annual tribute. In addition, Darius demands the daughter of Philip for his bride, having heard of her beauty. In some versions Philip gives her willingly and in others, with reluctance. They are married, but after consumating the union, Darius becomes aware that his bride's breath has a foul odor, and his affection for her cools. In some versions he tries to have her condition cured through the use of herbs, namely sandar, which gives rise to a folk etymology for the name Alexander.¹ In some versions she is cured but Darius has lost interest in her and sends her back to her father anyway. In other versions he does not try to cure her but packs her off at once. From their union of one night she

¹ Dinavari, al-Akhhār al-Ṭevāl, ed. V. Guirgass (Leiden, 1888), p. 32. "The nurses treated her with a plant called Sandar and the bad odor diminished. Dārā called her to himself and smelled the odor of Sandar coming from her, and said 'Āl-e Sandar,' that is, 'how strong the smell of Sandar is.' The word āl in Persian means 'severity, intensity.'" These meanings for āl are unattested in the standard dictionaries of classical Persian. Āl in the dialects of Sorkha and Semnān means "mouth". See Adib Ṭusi, Farhang-e Loghāt-e Bāz Yāfta (Tabriz, 1343), p. 11.

is pregnant, and after returning to Greece she gives birth in secret to Alexander.

This story appears in Dārāb Nāma, Eskandar Nāma, and Shāhnāma. Of the historians, Dinavari, Tha'ālebi and the author of Mojmal al-Tavārikh include it, while Mas'udi, Ṭabari and Bal'ami do not. It does not appear in Neẓāmi's Sharaf Nāma.

Aside from its presence in the Alexander story, the motif of bad breath occurs only two other times in the romances. Both of these occurrences are in the same story, that of the sorceress Zarda in Firuz Shāh Nāma. In her first appearance she is described as a "very ugly old woman with blue eyes, her face wrinkled with age and as yellow as saffron, her hair as white as camphor. She had two teeth like the tusks of a boar, a mouth like the stablehands' latrine the rotten stench of which would overcome the world, long nails, and a skin that not a drop of water had touched during the three hundred years of her unholy life."² In another scene, Behruz faints away at the horrible smell of her breath.³ What seems natural for a sorceress does not seem natural for a Greek princess however. The complex of motifs and conventional descriptions which are associated with each type of character are so conventional in the romances that the intrusion of a motif like bad breath in the description of a princess is felt at once

² Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, p. 210.

³ Ibid., p. 222.

to be foreign. Since this motif associated with a princess appears in erudite works as well as in the romances, but only in the Alexander story, it can not be by chance and must have been introduced from a non-Persian source.

Shortly before the Christian era the motif of the poison-damsel appeared in India.⁴ The most significant mention of the poison-damsel is in a Sanskrit drama by Visakhadatta entitled Mudro-Rakshasa, written in approximately the seventh century A.D.⁵ The events of this drama take place in 313 B.C. and concern the rise to power of Chandragupta Maurya. Classical sources say that Alexander and Chandragupta met, but whether these stories are true or not, Chandragupta did rise to power shortly after Alexander's invasion.⁶ In the drama, an enemy kept a poison-damsel to slay Chandragupta, but the latter was protected by a faithful minister and escaped harm. Penzer cites a few other examples of this motif in Sanskrit literature, but the motif is not common.

The poison-damsel was a girl who from birth had been reared on poison. As a baby she was fed small amounts of it, insufficient to kill her but enough to accustom her system to it. The amount was gradually increased until she ate nothing but poison and had become extremely poi-

⁴ N. M. Penzer, "Poison-Damsels," in Somadeva Bhatta. The Ocean of Story, trans. C. H. Tawney (London, 1924), II, 281.

⁵ Loc. cit.

⁶ Cf. A. L. Basham, The Wonder that was India (New York, 1954), p. 50.

sonous.

Poison-damsels were usually kept by kings and groomed from birth to be the instrument of death for an enemy. Beautiful girls were often given to other kings as gifts or tribute, and the poison-damsel could be easily be included in such a gift. At the first opportunity she would do her job, and sometimes was good for only one attempt, losing her deadly quality, like a bee, after one sting.⁷

A poison-damsel's methods of killing were varied. Kissing, touching, mingling of perspiration, and intercourse were some of the ways. Sometimes she gave off a deadly atmosphere and merely being in her presence was fatal, but most important for our purposes was the fact that she could kill with a poisoned breath.

In the twelfth century A.D. a work was translated from Arabic into Latin under the title of Secretum Secretorum, apparently from the Arabic al-Asrār.⁸ The background information on this text is well summarized by the editor of Roger Bacon: "In the introduction to the work as we now have it we are told that it was translated from Greek into Rumi, and from Rumi into Arabic, by Yuhanna ibn el-Batrik (or Ibn Yahya al-Batrik). Rumi is the common word for Syriac, when it does not mean Greek, and Yuhanna, who died A.D. 815, was a well-known translator, physician

⁷ Penzer, op. cit., p. 284.

⁸ Ibid., p. 287.

of al-Ma'mun, who is said to have rendered the Politics and the Historia Animalium into Syriac . . . and . . . other works, into Arabic."⁹ About the possibility of an original Greek text, Steele says, "Had the book any claim to a Greek origin? I think not . . . The texture itself of the original work is oriental, not western. I believe it to have had its origin in the interaction between Persian and Syriac ideas which took place in the seventh to ninth centuries of our era, and probably at the same time as the Alexander legend studied by Dr. Budge . . . No Syriac text has been found."¹⁰ The work purported to be by Aristotle and contained the text of the correspondence which was supposed to have passed between him and Alexander during one of the latter's expeditions. Its authenticity is doubtful, but what is more important, in it Aristotle gives Alexander advice on how to protect himself from a poison-damsel.¹¹ The work became very popular in Europe in the Middle Ages and stories from it, including the one of Alexander and the poison-damsel entered European literature, appearing in such collections as the Gesta Romanorum. This served to spread the story throughout medieval Europe. During this process the motif came to

⁹ R. Bacon, Opera hactenus inedita, ed. Robert Steele (Oxford, 1920), fasc. V, xi.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. x.

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 60, 191.

be associated with persons other than Alexander, a common process in folklore and popular literature.

Penzer, in examining the antecedents of the Secretum Secretorum, says, "Scholars are agreed that there is no Greek text in existence, and no proof that it ever did exist. Now if we look more closely into the longer Arabic and Hebrew texts, we find that the background of the book is wholly Eastern--Persian and Indian--while, on the other hand, there is hardly a mention of Greece."¹²

If, as I submit, the motif of the bad breath in the Alexander story is a version of the poison-damsel motif, then how did it get there? As we have seen, the motif occurs in Eskandar Nāma, the Persian descendant of the Pseudo-Callisthenes romance, in Shāhnāma, in Dārāb Nāma, and in Tha'ālebi. We know that Shāhnāma and Tha'ālebi have sources which go directly back to the Middle Persian Khwadāy Nāmag complex. Ferdowsi himself states that he used the Shāhnāma of Abu Manṣur of Tus, who it is known used a version of the old Khwadāy Nāmag.¹³ Zotenberg in the introduction to his edition of Tha'ālebi states that the author must have followed an unusual chronicle quite closely.¹⁴ Nöldeke points out that Ferdowsi's and Tha'ālebi's sources, although substantially the same, differed

¹² Op. cit., p. 290.

¹³ Cf. T. Nöldeke, Das iranische Nationalepos, 2nd ed. (Berlin, 1920), p. 19.

¹⁴ Al-Tha'ālebi, Tārīkh Ghorar al-Siar, ed. and trans. H. Zotenberg (Paris, 1900), p. xix, xxv-xxvii, xli.

sufficiently in detail to indicate that different versions of the Khwadāy Nāmag were used.¹⁵

The Pseudo-Callisthenes Life of Alexander was, according to Nöldeke, translated from Greek into Pahlavi in late Sassanian times.¹⁶ The Pahlavi version no longer exists. The existing Syriac version was translated from this Pahlavi version and gives us a reasonable idea of what the Pahlavi version must have been like. From the Syriac, a translation was made into Arabic, and from Arabic into Amharic.¹⁷ The Persian popular romance Eskandar Nāma dates from between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries A.D. and is based on an Arabic version of the Pseudo-Callisthenes romance,¹⁸ with much material drawn from Iranian sources.¹⁹ Since Eskandar Nāma was only recently discovered and published, it was not taken into account by the earlier scholars of the Alexander novel such as Budge, Nöldeke and Garcia-Gomez. The point here is that none of the versions or translations of the Pseudo-Callisthenes ro-

¹⁵ Op. cit., p. 42.

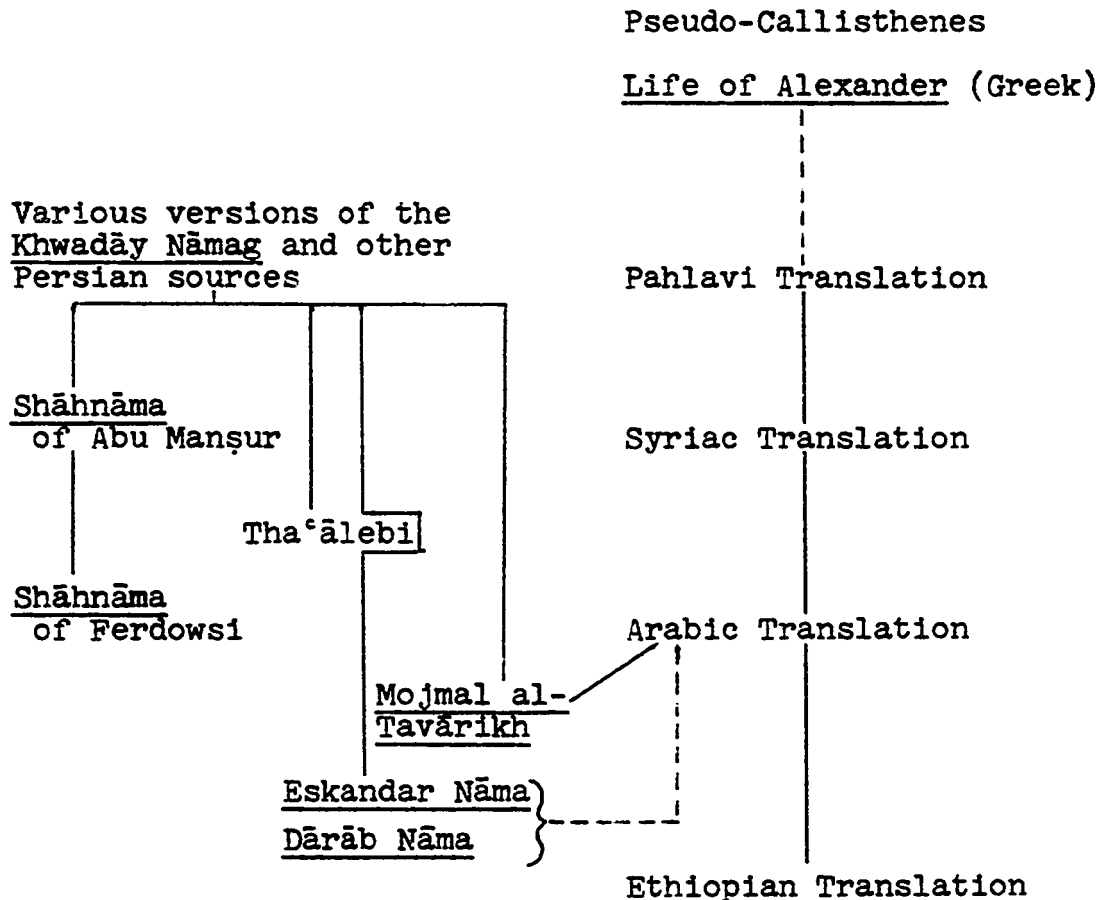
¹⁶ T. Nöldeke, "Beiträge zur Geschichte des Alexanderromans." Denkschriften der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Klasse, XXXVIII(1890), pp. 11-24.

¹⁷ Introduction to Eskandar Nāma, pp. 16, 18-21.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 24.

¹⁹ See E. A. Wallis Budge, The Alexander Book in Ethiopia (London, 1933), p. xxvii. He says here that the oldest part of the story ends with Alexander leaving Egypt for Syria. The Persian, Indian and Turkestan parts were derived from Iranian sources, possibly Pahlavi.

mance in the main line of transmission from the Pahlavi to the Amharic contain the motif of the bad breath. It is only in the versions based heavily on Iranian sources, such as Shahnama, Eskandar Nama, Darab Nama, and Mojmal al-Tavarikh, that this motif appears. The following diagram shows these relationships:



We know that there was considerable literary contact between Iran and India in Sassanian times, because books like Kalila and Dimna were translated from Sanskrit into Pahlavi. There were indirect influences as well. Themes,

motifs and literary forms entered Iranian literature from India.²⁰ The structural device of the framed story, so evident in Kalila and Dimna, was a basic feature of the now lost Hezār Afsāna, the Persian collection of tales which formed the basis of the Arabic collection Alf Layla va Layla.²¹

The Indian king Keyd is mentioned in the Kārnāmak, so the possibility that the story of this king and the poison-damsel was known in Persia in late Sassanian times is very strong.²²

The poison-damsel motif probably entered Iranian literature in late Sassanian or early Islamic times, possibly in the same work which became the Arabic al-Asrār. The motif became part of the Alexander story in the Pahlavi chronicles but was not a part of the basic Pseudo-Callisthenes version of this story.

To conclude let us summarize what has been said. The poison-damsel was a deadly girl kept by kings and high officials to dispose of their enemies. One way the poison-damsel could kill was with poisonous breath. This motif

²⁰ Cf. M. Boyce, "The Indian Fables in The Letter of Tansar," Asia Major, n.s., V(1955), 50-58.

²¹ Ibn al-Nadim, al-Fehrest, ed. G. Flügel (Leipzig, 1871-72), p. 304. Here he clearly describes the frame story of the Hezār Afsāna.

²² W. Hertz, "Die Sage vom Giftmädchen," Abh. der Kon. Bayer. Akad. der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Classe, XX (1897), p. 152.

is not found in Iranian literature, while it is found in Indian literature. Thus its presence in strongly Iranianized stories must represent an influence from outside. We also have seen in the case of European literature, the poison-damsel motif became widespread and was associated with persons other than Alexander although it was introduced in connection with Alexander in the Secretum Secretorum. In the Iranian versions of the Alexander romance we have the motif of the daughter of Philip of Macedon having bad breath and being rejected by Darius. This appears to be a transfer of the poison-damsel-with-poisonous breath motif to Philip's daughter and the conquering King Darius, to whom a beautiful girl must be sent as tribute. It is the ideal situation in which to employ a poison-damsel. In Dārāb Nāma, Eskandar Nāma, Shāhnāma, Tha'ālebi and Mojmal al-Tavārikh we have a version of this Indian motif which entered the Iranian national tradition and was carried into New Persian literature.

As a final note on this motif it should be mentioned that it survived at least until the late nineteenth century in Baluchi folklore. Dames quotes a Baluchi tale of Nāder Shāh and two handmaidens whom he acquired from Moḥammad Shāh of Delhi. They were to help him brush his teeth, but when he gargled, such a foul stench came out of his mouth that one of the maidens fell dead at once and the other barely managed to survive. Here the roles are

reversed, with the king having the poisonous breath and killing the handmaiden, but basically the motif is the same.²³

²³ "Balochi Tales," Folk-Lore, VIII(1897), pp. 78-79.

Alexander: The Persianization of a Foreign Hero

One of the most prominent figures in the popular romances is the Greek conqueror Alexander. He appears as the hero of two romances, Eskandar Nāma and the second part of Dārāb Nāma. Alexander was such a magnetic figure, one who so captured the imagination, that it is not surprising that his story was taken up by the storytellers as well as by the court poets. Well known are the Alexander romances by Nezāmi, Amir Khosrow of Delhi and others, and the Alexander episode in Shāhnāma. Secular literature was not the only place where Alexander left his mark however, for he is mentioned several times in the Middle Persian Zoroastrian texts. He was discussed by all of the Islamic historians as well.

An event in a nation's history as important as the fall of a powerful and glorious dynasty will be long remembered. When Alexander brought an end to the Achaemenian empire, Persia's power and glory went into eclipse for almost five centuries until it was revived again by the Sassanians. After this span of years one would expect the memory of such an event to become blurred at its edges. Unlike today, there was a lack of abundant written records. When the time came for the Sassanians to set down the nation's history, how did the historians remember Alexander? What were their sources of information? What strands were woven together to produce the picture of

Alexander which has survived for us in both the polite and the popular literature? These three broad questions help to define the problem with which we are faced when we begin to consider the figure of Alexander in the popular literature. These questions will be discussed below and some solutions proposed.

The Persianization of Alexander is a process which we can observe operating to a moderate degree in the polite literature and to an extreme degree in the popular romances. In Eskandar Nāma and Dārāb Nāma Alexander is Persianized not only in his genealogy but also in his personality. How and when this Persianization took place is the key problem and the one where the evidence for its solution is the scantiest. On the basis of what evidence is available however, a hypothesis can be formed that the Persianization of Alexander took place in late Sassanian times and was done deliberately. How this process operated will be shown below.

It is a demonstrable fact that the basic elements of the Alexander story as we have it in Eskandar Nāma and Dārāb Nāma, and in Shāhnāma, Nezāmi and the other court poets who versified it, come from a text or texts which descend from a third century A.D. novel about Alexander. This novel was written in Greek, probably in Alexandria, by an unknown author. Some time later it was ascribed to Callisthenes, the historian and companion of Alexander, but historical evidence makes this ascription impossible.

For convenience then, the author of the Greek novel is called Pseudo-Callisthenes. Recent research by Pfister¹ and Merkelbach² has shown more clearly what the sources of Pseudo-Callisthenes must have been. The sources were partly literary and historical and partly oral legends or an Alexandrian "chapbook," a popular piece of romantic writing which the Germans call a Volksbuch. None of the existing Greek manuscripts of Pseudo-Callisthenes can resemble the original for they have been enlarged in later times by the addition of a great deal of material. Some of this is in the form of letters supposed to have been written by Alexander and others.

Four recensions of the Pseudo-Callisthenes novel have been traced and three of these are represented by manuscripts. The fourth has been deduced from elements common to a group of texts. These recensions are called α , β , γ and (δ) Pseudo-Callisthenes. The β , γ and (δ) recensions are dependent upon the α -recension which thus becomes the earliest source of all the legendary Alexander material. "The (δ) recension is not represented by any surviving Greek manuscript, but it survives indirectly in the ultimate (lost) source of a Syriac and an Ethiopic version, and the (lost) Greek manuscript

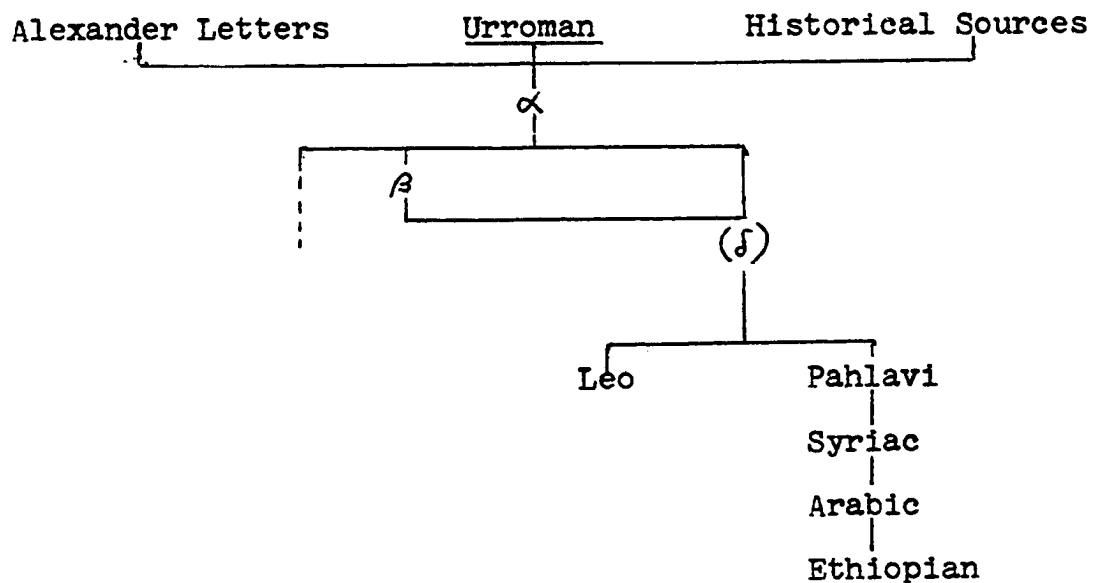
¹ F. Pfister, "Studien zum Alexanderroman," Würzburger Jahrbuch, I(1946), pp. 29-66.

² R. Merkelbach, Quellen des griechischen Alexanderromans, Zetemata IX, (Munich, 1954).

translated into Latin by Archpriest Leo of Naples in the tenth century. This recension was probably based on a good

α - type manuscript. Further details of its derivatives are as follows: The Syriac prose Alexander was probably translated, in or before the sixth century, from a (now lost) Pehlevi translation of a (δ) type Greek manuscript . . . In the ninth century the Syriac version was translated into Arabic. The Arabic redaction has not survived . . .³

This is a simplified stemma of the various recensions:⁴



This brings us to the Persian versions of the Pseudo-

³ The material in this and the preceding paragraph is from G. Cary, The Medieval Alexander (Cambridge, 1956; reprinted 1967), pp. 9-11.

⁴ Cf. Pfister, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

Callisthenes story. When Nöldeke wrote his "Beiträge"⁵ the texts of Eskandar Nāma and Dārāb Nāma had not yet been discovered, so Nöldeke could use only the accounts in Shāhnāma, the Syriac Pseudo-Callisthenes and the early historians such as the author of Mojmal al-Tavārikh. His conclusions based on this evidence were sound and the evidence of Eskandar Nāma and Dārāb Nāma often serves to confirm them. The two popular texts offer greatly expanded versions of the story, which versions allow us to gain a broader perspective on the development and transmission of the basic Pseudo-Callisthenes story.

At this point an analysis of five versions of the Alexander story will help make the relationship of these versions clearer. The texts chosen for this analysis are the α recension,⁶ the Syriac version,⁷ and the versions from Shāhnāma, Eskandar Nāma and Dārāb Nāma.

⁵ T. Nöldeke, "Beiträge zur Geschichte des Alexanderromans." Denkschriften der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Klasse, XXXVIII(1890).

⁶ Pseudo-Callisthenes, The Life of Alexander of Macedonia, ed. and trans. E. H. Haight (New York, 1955).

⁷ Ibid., The History of Alexander the Great, Being the Syriac Version, ed. and trans. E. Budge (Cambridge, 1889).

Syriac

Birth of Alexander

Nectanebos flees Egypt before an attack of Iranians. Goes in disguise to Macedonia. An Egyptian oracle predicts his son will be mightier than he and will traverse the world.

Philip away at war. Olympias sees Nectanebos. He deceives her and sleeps with her. Alexander born of this union.

Childhood

Alexander did not resemble father, mother or Philip. Eyes of different colors. Went to war with Philip at age 12. Alexander kills his father. Subdues the fierce horse Bucephalus. Wins a chariot race in Pisa. Fights the guests at a dinner and insults Philip.

Birth of Alexander

Dārāb marries Philip's daughter. Philip is Qey-sar of Rum. Dārāb sends her back to Rum because of bad breath. Alexander born, called Philip's son by a slave girl. Identified with Zu al-Qarneyn. Mother tells him who his father is. Dārāb the son of a Hindu princess from Kashmir.

Dārāb Nama

Pseudo-Callisthenes

Greek

Birth of Alexander

Philip of the race of Feridun and a descendant of Key Qobād. Dārāb asks for his daughter Nāhid. Marries her but sends her back because of bad breath. Alexander born in a tent near Aristotle's cell. There he is abandoned and a goat nourishes him until an old woman finds him. She brings him up. A lion guards the tent.

Childhood

At age 4 old woman takes him to Aristotle who keeps him until age 10, teaching him dream interpreting. Nāhid remarries to a Berber. Alexander sent back to Philip but escapes to Aristotle. Flees to Nāhid. Fired from an administrative job for too efficient work and sets up as an astrologer and dream interpreter. Displeases the king by interpreting a dream, and is put into prison. Mother learns who he is and tries to free him. King surprises them in harem. They escape to Philip. Philip makes him king.

Birth of Alexander

The Nectanebos story.

Childhood

He kills his father Nectanebos. The chariot race in Pisa. The fight with the guests and the insult to Philip.

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Shāhnāma

Shāhnāma

(Reduced)

Birth of Alexander

Dārāb defeats Philip in two battles and asks for Philip's daughter Nāhid. Philip sends her. They marry but Dārāb sends her back, pregnant, because of bad breath. Alexander is born and grows up brave and heroic.

Childhood

Alexander is crown prince until Philip dies, when he becomes king. Dārāb dies and Dārā as a rash, impetuous youth becomes king. Aristotle becomes Alexander's advisor.

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Syriac

Early Adventures

Ambassadors from Dārāb and the golden egg story. Defeats the Armenians. Philip dies. Alexander sails to Rome where they buy him off. Thence to Africa where he subdues Carthage. Thence to Egypt. Has an oracular dream and builds Alexandria. Conquers Syria, Tyre. Dārāb's ambassadors take back Alexander's portrait with which Roxanne falls in love. Dārāb sends threatening letter to Alexander, with the whip, ball and sesame seeds. Alexander answers Dārāb and declares he will defeat him. Returns to Macedonia because his mother is ill. Defeats a Persian general in Arabia on the way. Starts back to Persia, conquers Thebes, Athens, and goes on to camp by the Tigris, the border of Persia.

Conquest of Dārāb

Alexander goes as ambassador to Dārāb. Steals the drinking cups. They battle, Dārāb is defeated and Alexander captures Dārāb's wife and mother. Alexander burns Persepolis. Dārāb flees and appeals to King Porus of India for aid. Alexander pursues Dārāb. Dārāb killed by Bagiz and Anabdeh. Final advice to Alexander: Marry my daughter and treat my mother as yours. He kills Dārāb's murderers.

Conquest of Dārāb

Alexander refuses Dārāb's demand for tribute. Dārāb declares war, is defeated and flees to Kerman for a year. After another defeat by Alexander, Dārāb stabbed by Māhyār and Jānuspār. Rowshanak, his wife, is of the race of Gudarz and is pregnant at Dārāb's death. She gives birth to a daughter and dies. Another pregnant wife sent back to India. Alexander will not marry Dārāb's wife, for he already has 4 legal wives and 40 concubines.

Dārāb Nama

Pseudo-Callisthenes

Greek

Early Adventures

Philip and Nāhid killed by jealous offspring. Aristotle advises Alexander and he takes the throne. Marches to Barbar and kills the king in revenge for killing his mother. Opens negotiations with Dārāb for half the inheritance. Argues with Aristotle and has a symbolic loss of farr. Loses all his wisdom. Will attack Dārāb. Uses Aristotle as an intermediary. Dārāb scornful.

Early Adventures

The ambassadors of Dārāb with the whip, ball, etc.

Conquest of Dārāb

Battle at the Euphrates and Dārāb captured. Alexander pays Māhyār and Jānusyār to kill Dārāb. Alexander remorseful. Dārāb's three dying wishes: 1) kill my attackers, 2) marry my daughter, 3) keep the world and its people well.

Conquest of Dārāb

Dārāb loses the first battle and his women are captured. Many letters exchanged. Alexander goes as a messenger to Dārāb and steals the golden cups. He burns Persepolis, then repents. Dārāb killed by Besus and Ariobarzanes at the Caspian Gates. The dying wishes: take care of my mother and marry my daughter Roxanne. Alexander marries her.

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Early Adventures

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Refuses Dārā's demand for tribute with the goose and golden egg story. Alexander marches on Persia via Egypt, and meets Dārā at the Euphrates.

Conquest of Dārā

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Alexander goes to Dārā as a messenger. Steals the golden wine cups. After three defeats, Dārā flees to Kerman and writes to Porus for aid. Stabbed by Māhyār and Jānusyār. Dying wishes: fear God, protect my wife, marry daughter Rowshanak, preserve the Avesta and the religion. Alexander writes to Delārā, Dārā's widow, to send Rowshanak for him to marry. He sends his mother to bring her from Isfahan to Istakhr.

Pseudo-Callisthenes

Eskandar Nāma

Syriac

ʿOman Campaign

Alexander reaches ʿOman
by way of Kerman. Receives
tribute of king of ʿOman.
Porus writes to Kasandar of
ʿOman ordering him either to
fight or capture Alexander.

Campaign Against Burān
Dokht

She is Dārāb's daughter. Raises an army to oppose Alexander. She loses the first engagement but wins the next. Defeats him again, then withdraws to attack Rum. Seizes Aleppo from the Rumis. Captures Alexander's treasure caravan.

She and Alexander clash in Khuzestan and she is captured. Escapes and returns to Aleppo. Defeats Alexander and goes to Istakhr, kills her mother and takes the throne. Attacked while returning to Aleppo and takes refuge in a cave. Escapes, recaptures Istakhr from Alexander and sets out again for Aleppo.

Enters Alexander's service in disguise. She has the farr. Together they return to Aleppo. She reveals herself and defeats Alexander at Aleppo. She returns and retakes the castle at Istakhr. Alexander finds her bathing and she ceases fighting him. Enthrones him and proclaims him king.

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Shāhnāma

Shāhnāma

(Reduced)

Syriac

Indian Campaign

Sets out to fight Porus. His soldiers rebel; he shames them. Alexander defeats Porus with the brass statues, then kills him in single combat.

Indian Campaign

Porus is king of India under Keyd. Alexander defeats Porus with fire-throwers on camel back. Captures him and has him executed. Alexander marries Porus' daughter Nāhid and sets off for Kashmir.

Kashmir Campaign

Āzād Bakht is king of Kashmir. Alexander wants his daughter Māh Āferin. A lot of plotting against Alexander by the king. The girl is in love with Alexander so she works against her father. Alexander captures Āzād Bakht and frees his brother Farrokh Bakht from prison, making him king, forcibly converts the population and Āzād Bakht becomes a dervish.

Ceylon Campaign

Alexander marches against Keyd. Goes in disguise, gains Keyd's confidence and his daughter. Later captures Keyd, receives his submission and tribute, and restores him to his throne. Visits Adam's tomb. Sets off by sea.

Dārāb Nāma

Pseudo-Callisthenes

Greek

Indian Campaign

Alexander sets out for India, but has trouble in the Lut. Meets Keyd at Kabul. Porus arrives with army and they fight near the Ganges. Alexander defeated and retreats to Kabul, sends for Burān Dokht and an army. Keyd and Porus both die after a bad defeat. Alexander fights Porus II. Alexander captured and rescued by Burān Dokht. Alexander finally defeats Porus II with the brass riders. Converts all the enemy soldiers.

Indian Campaign

Marches to India. Soldiers revolt and he shames them. Defeats Porus with the bronze riders and kills him in single combat.

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Keyd's 10-night dream interpreted as a sign of Alexander's coming. Keyd will send the four wonderful things: 1) beautiful girl, 2) wise sage, 3) doctor, 4) ever-full cup. Alexander accepts after testing them all. Goes to Qanuj, writes to Porus. Porus will make war. Alexander marches but his army balks and he shames them. Defeats Porus with the brass riders and kills him in single combat.

No changes from Shāhnāma story.

Syriac

Adventures in India

Visits the naked sages. Writes long letter to Aristotle listing the wonders he has seen. A talking tree predicts where he will die. Goes to China and Sogd where he builds Samarqand. Visits Queen Candace. Sends troops to fight Amazons for her son. Goes to the Amazons and subdues them peacefully.

Adventures in India

Island of bees. Devāl-pās. Returns to India, sees Keyd, goes to Kashmir. Returns to 'Oman. Proceeds to Mecca. Settles matters there. Leaves for Yemen.

Trip to the West

Wants king of Yemen's daughter. Defeats the king, marries the daughter, Soheyl, and sets off for Egypt. Defeats and captures the king of Egypt. Sends all his women back to his mother for safety. Kills one princess of Egypt and marries another, Qatisa. Sets off for Andalusia. Settles things there. Heads west. Meets Khezr and makes him leader of the army. Passes many cities and enters the Darkness. Khezr finds the water of life but Alexander does not. Visits Mt. Qāf. Returns to a land of snakes. Sails off and lands near Māchin.

Dārīb Nāma

Pseudo-Callisthenes

Greek

Adventures in India

Marches to a mountain surrounded by water, then a city of tall men, where a huge bird comes and carries off an elephant. Thence to a body of quicksand or foam. Defeats cannibals, finds a marvelous tree (tree of life) planted by Adam and Eve.

Adventures in India

Visits the naked sages. Writes a long letter to Aristotle. Marches off and finds the fish-back island, the city built on reeds, the bitter water, and the male and female talking trees, one of which predicts his death in Babylon.

Adventures in Ceylon

Visits Adam's tomb and finds there several extremely old men.

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Pseudo-Callisthenes

Eskandar Nāma

Syriac

Adventures in Central Asia

King of Māchin descended from Garsivaz, and rules under the Khāqān of Chin. Captures and frees the king. Goes to another city and marries the king's daughter. Fights the Kipchak. Kills king of another city in revenge for death of Siāvush. Proceeds to Afrāsiyāb's city, thence to Ru' in Dezh. Sees the Khazars, reaches another city where all the people are blind. Goes to the Khāqān, captures and kills him. Much plotting against Alexander. Alexander enthrones a son of old Khāqān. Proceeds to kingdom of Taghmāj. Sets charms against divs and paris and passes several cities. Defeats some divs.

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Adventures Elsewhere

Visits kingdom of Semi-ramis ruled over by Candace. Ptolemy her son. The portrait of Alexander. He goes to the Amazons, then returns to Babylon after Aristotle's letter. Writes long letter to his mother. The evil portents. Poisoned by Arstipater. Attempted suicide. His will. Statistics. (Lived 30 years.)

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Shāhnāma

Shāhnāma

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Pseudo-Callisthenes

Eskandar Nāma

Syriac

Greek

Adventures in the East

Sail into a huge area of sea-foam. Reach shore, put their sails on carts and sail across the desert. Meet descendants of Pashang, take the city, then sail overland to a Red Sea and find an island of women or hermaphrodites. Their queen a daughter of Dārāb by a Greek woman. Attacked by Dog-heads. Find Plato, whose mountain catches fire. Converts the Dog-heads. Finds a golden minaret, and a city of women. Lands on an island which is really the back of a huge fish. Dams up a strait, finds another land of snakes, a land of sun-worshippers, and finally reaches the Zangis.

Adventures in the Zangi Islands

Meets Loqmān. Burān Dokht captured and taken off to sea. Rescued by Alexander's troops. All are involved with a Zangi tribe and its queen. Meet people with one eye. Loqmān helps Alexander build a tower to see angels on a mountain top. Birds drive them off by dropping stones. Meets paris. Fights divs. Alexander carried to Mt. Qāf. Meets Khezr and Elyās. Conquers the divs and sails on to an island of monkeys. Fights the monkeys near Sūtān. Reaches an island of magicians. Defeats the sorcerers with divine aid and sails to Yemen. Settles matters in Mecca, sends Burān Dokht back to Iran with the treasure.

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Shāhnāma

Shāhnāma

(Reduced)

Pseudo-Callisthenes

Eskandar Nāma

Syriac

Adventures in the West

In Medina meets Loqmān, Khezr, and Elyās who will aid him. Subdues king of Egypt. Plato builds a wonderful tower. Sails to the twin cities which appear and disappear each day, which turn out to be two huge snake heads. Finds a huge tree full of spiders. Destroys it, finds quicksand, and a city with high walls. Kills the king and queen, finds a city of tall blacks with iron earrings, a black elephant-eating people, an evergreen tree planted by Adam, a panacea spring, devāl-pās, creatures with men's bodies and bird's heads, wolfheads, men with eyes in back of their heads, kalim gushān, a huge colorful bird (simorgh), a tree which dies each day, and the Green Sea which Alexander explores. He builds the wall of Gog and Magog. Reaches world of darkness, a wonderful horse takes him to top of Mt. Qāf, Khezr and Elyās drink the water of life but Alexander does not. Heads east again. Finds several cities of sleeping people. A talking statue warns Alexander. He heads for Jerusalem. The animals on the plain swear allegiance to him. He converts the people of Andalus, and destroys or converts several other cities. He has built a golden coffin. Dies in Jerusalem. Burān Dokht dies a year later in Iran.

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(Reduced)

Adventures in the West

Hastens to Mecca and settles matters there, then on to Egypt for a year. Queen Keydāfa of Andalusia has his portrait painted, then refuses his demand for tribute. Captures her son Qeydrus, and goes to her as a messenger. She recognizes him and he promises not to harm her or her family. One son is a son-in-law of Porus and wants vengeance. Alexander deceives him, defeats and pardons him.

Adventures in the West

Queen Keydāfa of Andalusia has his portrait painted, then refuses his demands for tribute. Alexander captures her son Qeydrus and goes to her as a messenger. She recognizes him and he promises not to harm her or her family. One son is a son-in-law of Porus and wants vengeance. Alexander deceives, defeats and pardons him.

Pseudo-Callisthenes

Eskandar Nāma

Syriac

Dārāb Nāma

Pseudo-Callisthenes

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Shāhnāma

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Adventures in the East

Visits the naked sages, thence to the Eastern Sea and Abyssinia. Sees the fish-back island, the city built on reeds, sweet water and snakes. Kills a lot of Zangis. Defeats the Narm pāyān, kills a dragon by using a cow skin stuffed with poison. Goes to the country of the Amazons. Returns to the West.

Adventures in the East

Visits the naked sages, thence to the Eastern Sea. Sees the fish-back island, the city built on reeds, sweet water and snakes. Goes to the Amazons. Crosses a desert and finds the male and female talking trees which predict his imminent death. Goes to China and sees the Faghfur. Returns to Sind, Yemen, and Babylon, passing the treasure of Key Khosrow.

Writes to Aristotle (contents of letter not given) and receives advice in return. The evil portents. Writes last wishes to his mother. Wants a golden coffin. Has throne taken out to the fields. Honey in the coffin. There he dies. Buried in Alexandria. Statistics.

In the West

Sees a city of red-headed people, leaves them in peace and heads for the water of life with Khezr as his guide. Loses Khezr in the darkness and Khezr finds the water but Alexander does not. Talks with the birds on a mountain, sees Isrāfil. Story of the jewels and the remorseful soldiers.

Pseudo-Callisthenes

Eskandar Nāma

Syriac

Return to Babylon and Death

Aristotle writes him to return and pay back his obligations to the gods. He writes a long letter to his mother. Portents precede Alexander's death. He is poisoned by son of Antipater. Tries to commit suicide but is prevented by Rowshanak. Reviews his troops, then writes his will. Buried in Alexandria, age 32 years, 7 months. Reigned 12 years, 7 months.

Dārāb Nāma

Pseudo-Callisthenes

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(Reduced)

In the East

Builds the wall of Gog and Magog. Finds a jewel palace and a sleeping monster on a mountain. Advice is shouted from a well. Crosses a desert and finds the male and female talking trees which predict his imminent death. Goes to Chin and sees the Faghfur. Returns to Sind, Yemen, Babylon, passing the treasure of Key Khosrow.

Writes to Aristotle and receives advice in return. The evil portents. Writes last wishes to his mother. Asks for a golden coffin. His throne taken out to the fields. Honey in the coffin. There he dies. Buried in Alexandria. Statistics.

Syriac

Divs, Paris, and Zangis

Reaches city of divs. Battle. Alexander kills all the divs with help of some wizards from Rum. Destroys the city. Rescues a princess from two Zangis. Alexander marries the princess, and sets out for the land of the paris. Battles them. They kidnap Alexander. He escapes and repels an attack of divs. Alexander captured again but freed. Defeats paris in battle and marries the queen, who is half human. Proceeds to land of the Rus and defeats them. Finds a princess in a trunk and marries her.

Attacks a Zangi fortress. Many battles. The pari queen gives birth to Iskandar. Kills Zangi king. Now battles the Turks. Queen fights too. Alexander separates from the queen, then is reconciled. Much plotting on both sides. Alexander captured again. Marries daughter of his captor. Defeats the Pil gushān. Captured again and rescued by the queen. Turkish king killed. They fight another pari army . . .

(Text incomplete.)

Dārāb Nāma

Pseudo-Callisthenes

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(Reduced)

Analysis of the Various Versions

In such an analysis it is helpful to be able to observe both the similarities and the differences between the texts. To facilitate this, we will discuss the relationship of individual texts to the others.

Greek and Syriac recensions of Pseudo-Callisthenes.

Common points between these two recensions follow:

- 1) Alexander the son of Nectanebos and Olympias.
- 2) Alexander kills his father Nectanebos.
- 3) The chariot race at Pisa.
- 4) The fight with the guests and the insult to Philip.
- 5) The ambassadors from Dārāb and the whip and ball anecdote.
- 6) Dārāb defeated in battle and his women captured by Alexander.
- 7) Alexander goes as an ambassador to Dārāb and steals the golden drinking cups.
- 8) Alexander burns Persepolis but later regrets his action.
- 9) Dārāb stabbed by disloyal officers. His dying wishes.
- 10) The Indian campaign and the defeat of Porus by means of the brass statues of horsemen.
- 11) Alexander kills Porus in single combat.
- 12) Alexander visits the naked sages.
- 13) He writes a long letter to Aristotle describing the wonders he has seen.

14) He finds the male and female talking trees, one of which predicts his imminent death.

15) The episode with Queen Candace.

16) His visit to the Amazons.

17) Aristotle's letter and Alexander's return to Babylon.

18) Alexander's letter to his mother.

19) The evil portents signalling Alexander's death.

20) Alexander is poisoned by an enemy.

21) He attempts suicide but is restrained by Rowshanak.

22) He writes his will.

23) Statistics of his age, reign, etc.

The Greek α and the Syriac recensions agree in all the important points of the story. The beginning and end are very closely alike. The Syriac lacks three incidents present in the Greek. These are:

a) The discovery of what appears to be an island but which in reality is the exposed back of a huge fish which sounds, drowning some sailors.

b) The discovery by Alexander of a city built off the ground on reeds.

c) The incident of finding bitter water and a large number of serpents.

In the Syriac version Alexander makes a journey to Central Asia and China after he finds the talking trees, whereas in the Greek text it is the other way around. In the Greek text he is more closely tied to his mother than

in the Syriac. He dreams of her, sees her in visions and often writes to her, all of which suggests that he has a mother-complex. In neither of these versions is found the journey to the Darkness and the quest for the water of life.

Syriac Pseudo-Callisthenes recension and Shāhnāma.

When we compare the Syriac version with that in Shāhnāma, the result is quite different. For purposes of comparing the basic elements of the story, I have used what I shall call a "reduced" version of the Shāhnāma story.⁸ This is the Shāhnāma story stripped of secondary and tertiary accretions, which will be explained in detail in their proper place.

Common points between Pseudo-Callisthenes Syriac and Shāhnāma:

- 1) Dārāb's ambassadors and the goose that laid the golden egg story.
- 2) Alexander marches on Dārāb via Egypt.
- 3) Alexander goes as an ambassador to Dārāb and steals the golden drinking cups.
- 4) Dārāb stabbed by disloyal officers. His dying wishes.
- 5) The Indian campaign and the defeat of Porus by means of the brass statues of horsemen.
- 6) Alexander kills Porus in single combat.

⁸ All references to Shāhnāma will be to the Berukhim ed. (Teheran, 1313-15).

- 7) Alexander visits the naked sages.
- 8) He writes a long letter to Aristotle.
- 9) He finds the talking trees.
- 10) The journey to Central Asia and Chin.
- 11) The episode with Queen Candace.
- 12) Alexander kills a dragon by using a cowhide stuffed with poison.
- 13) His visit to the Amazons.
- 14) Alexander's letter to his mother.
- 15) The evil portents.
- 16) He has made a golden coffin.
- 17) His interment in Alexandria.
- 18) Statistics.

In both texts Alexander returns to Babylon, but not because of Aristotle's advice to do so. In Shāhnāma the story of Alexander's birth is entirely different from the Syriac version.⁹ Lacking in Shāhnāma are the full account of Alexander's childhood, a long series of battles in Greece, North Africa and Asia Minor which take place between the arrival of the first Persian ambassadors and the first military encounter with Dārāb, the story of Roxanne falling in love with Alexander's portrait, the account of Alexander burning Persepolis, Aristotle's suggestion that Alexander return to Babylon, and the scene of Alexander being poisoned and his attempted suicide. Thus the beginning and end of the Shāhnāma version are completely dif-

⁹ See below for details of the new birth story.

ferent from the Syriac.

We have briefly compared the "reduced" Shāhnāma story with the Syriac version, which is a useful procedure because it establishes the structural relationship of the two versions. By using the "reduced" version of Shāhnāma, we are able to see the bare bones of the story without its later accretions. Since we are concerned with the Persianization of Alexander as a figure in literature, it will be helpful to isolate those elements which were added and deleted from the basic story to make the Shāhnāma version.

1) The story of Alexander's parentage as it is in the Syriac and Greek versions has been dropped and a new birth story substituted. Instead of being the son (by an illicit union) of the fugitive Egyptian king, Nectanebos, and Philip's wife, Olympias, Alexander is now the son of Dārāb¹⁰ and Philip's daughter Nāhid. The story is a familiar one, for all the Iranian versions of the Alexander legend have it. Dārāb conquers Philip in battle and as tribute demands Philip's daughter. Philip willingly or reluctantly, according to the version, sends her to the Persian. Dārāb spends one night with her, makes her pregnant, and afterwards sends her back to Macedon because he can not bear the smell of her breath. She gives birth to a boy

¹⁰ In all versions except Shāhnāma, both father and son are named Dārāb. In Shāhnāma the father is Dārāb and the son is Dārā. Historically Dārāb represents Darius II and his son Dārā(b) represents Darius III.

whom she names Alexander and whom, to avoid a scandal, is claimed as Philip's son by a concubine. Dārāb has a son by another wife and names him Dārā, thus making the protagonists half-brothers. Virolleaud's remark after Massé that the historic conflict of Darius and Alexander is thus reduced to a family quarrel may sound too flippant, but the truth of it is apparent.¹¹ The new birth story is the most important step in the Persianization of Alexander, for it brings him into the Achaemenian line of kings. This gives him a legitimacy as king of Iran which he could not have had if the legends had left him as a full-blooded Greek. In the legendary history Dārāb had another son Ashk who became the progenitor of the Ashkanians, and still another son Sāsān whose descendants became the Sassanians. The royal line was never broken because before his death Alexander took pains to install local kings throughout his kingdom, all on an equal basis with none more powerful than any other. These were the Moluk al-Tavāyef. Thus from Cyrus I to Yazdgerd III there was a continuous line of legitimate kings. This is the significance of the Moluk al-Tavāyef in the national tradition.

2) With the dropping of the traditional Pseudo-Callisthenes birth story, the section describing Alexander's childhood in Greece, his education and early feats, and

¹¹ C. Virolleaud, "Le Roman iranien de L'Émir Hamza," CRAIBL, 1948, p. 225.

his battles in Greece, Asia Minor and North Africa is also dropped. Instead, the narrative moves rapidly from his birth to the time when Philip makes him crown prince. This is another point emphasizing the Iranian concern for legitimacy in its monarchs. Along with this is added to Shāhnāma a short account of the death of Dārāb and the ascension of Dārā. The latter is pictured as a rash, impetuous youth.

3) An episode in the Syriac version where Roxanne falls in love with Alexander after seeing his portrait has been omitted from the Shāhnāma and all subsequent Iranian versions. To have included this would have decreased the dramatic quality of the last moments of Dārā's life, when he requests Alexander to marry his daughter and to mingle the seed of Dārāb and Philip in her.

4) The first military encounter of Dārā and Alexander in Shāhnāma takes place at the Euphrates, not the Tigris, thus giving the impression of the kingdom having a more distant frontier.

5) Shāhnāma does not have the episode, present in all the non-Iranian versions, in which all the women of Dārā's household are captured by Alexander after their first battle. This gives rise to an exchange of letters between Dārā and Alexander. According to recently discovered papyri described by Merkelbach, this episode must have formed a very old part of the story.¹² Accompanying this

¹² Op. cit., pp. 3-4, 93-94.

incident are scenes of Dārā falling prostrate in his palace after his flight from Alexander, and weeping at the loss of his women. These are also omitted from Shāhnāma.

6) In Shāhnāma, after three defeats, Dārā flees to Kerman and from there writes to Porus for aid from India. The flight to Kerman is not in the Syriac version. Omitted from Shāhnāma however, is any mention of Alexander's burning of Persepolis and subsequent remorse.

7) In Shāhnāma Dārā's dying requests to Alexander contain the additional wishes that Alexander fear God and preserve the Avesta and the Religion.

8) After Dārā's death, Shāhnāma has Alexander write a letter to the mother of Roxanne, asking that Roxanne be made ready to wed Alexander. He later writes to his own mother in Alexandria to fetch Roxanne from Isfahan and bring her to Istakhr for the marriage.

9) In the Syriac there is no mention of Alexander's journey to Central Asia and his visit to the Faghfur of Chin.

10) Alexander's return to Babylon at the suggestion of Aristotle, his being poisoned by an enemy, his attempted suicide and the writing of his will are all omitted from Shāhnāma. There he merely returns and dies shortly after the evil portents appear.

11) On the way back to Babylon, Alexander in the Shāhnāma story passes a place which contains a treasure left by Key Khosrow.

The Shāhnāma version comprises certain basic story elements from Pseudo-Callisthenes plus numerous accretions. The above list is not exhaustive but is a list of basic changes in the story which illustrate how the original Greek story has become Iranianized. Besides being Iranianized, however, the story has also been Islamicized. On the basis of the probable origin of the new additions to the story, two levels of accretions may be distinguished. First are the secondary accretions which consist of events and episodes which come from Iranian historic or legendary material. It is these which account for the basic Iranianization of the story.

Elements are added which tend to enhance the reputation of both protagonists and soften the psychological effect of this event on subsequent generations of Iranians. The birth story is the best example of this. One could also mention the emphasis on Alexander's becoming crown prince, the first encounter at the Euphrates rather than the Tigris, Dārā's dying request to Alexander to fear God and preserve the Avesta and the Religion, and Alexander's letter to mother and daughter before carrying out Dārā's wish to marry Roxanne. Another kind of secondary accretion is the account of Alexander's journey to Central Asia and the Faghfur of Chin.

On the other hand, it can be seen from the above list that certain incidents which would conflict with the image of Alexander as Dārā's half-brother and legitimate king

have been dropped. The burning of Persepolis is one such. The same process has operated in the case of Dārā, for the story of the capture of his women is omitted and with it the scenes of his weeping, prostrate on the palace floor. Also omitted is his correspondence with Alexander on this matter.

On the next level are the tertiary accretions, which consist of the incidents and events which come from strictly Islamic historical or legendary material, be it Persian or other. Such incidents as King Keyd of India dreaming for ten successive nights and having the dreams all interpreted, Alexander going to Qanuj, the episode at Mecca where Alexander installs the rightful guardians of the Ka'ba and punishes the usurpers, his visit to Abyssinia and the battle with the Zangis, the encounter with the "soft-footed ones" (Narm pāyān), the killing of a dragon by means of a cowhide stuffed with poison and swords, his journey to the Darkness accompanied by Khezr, his search for the water of life, the talking birds, his meeting with Isrāfil, the building of the wall of Gog and Magog, the discovery of a jewel palace with a monster asleep in it, and advice being shouted at him from a nearby well are all tertiary accretions.

Alexander and the Iranian National Legend. Tradition has it that during the reign of Khosrow I a collection of legends and stories about the kings of ancient Iran was made, and in this way the foundation for the national epic

was laid.¹³ In the reign of Yazdgerd III (633-652) a dehqān named Dāneshvar compiled a comprehensive work on the history of Iran from the earliest times to the death of Khosrow II (628).¹⁴ This was the Khwadāy Nāmag. It is known that this Pahlavi text was translated in the middle eighth century into Arabic by ibn al-Moqaffa'. Rypka says that many other translations appeared later on, after that of ibn al-Moqaffa' some of which made use of this old translation, others again inserted episodes drawn from Middle Persian books, and yet others compared the versions and tried to reconstruct the Khwadāy Nāmag in its original form.¹⁵ In the middle tenth century Abu Manşur ibn 'Abd al-Razzāq of Tus ordered his vizier Abu Manşur al-Mo'ammari to compile a book of kings with the help of learned men and dehqāns from surrounding cities. They list a number of their sources in their introduction, which survives as the Old Introduction to the Shāhnāma.¹⁶ Some of these sources have survived but many have perished

¹³ T. Nöldeke, Das iranische Nationalepos, 2nd. ed., (Berlin, 1920), pp. 12-13.

¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 13-14. See also H. Taqi Zāda, "Shāhnāma va Ferdowsi," in Hezāra-e Ferdowsi (Teheran, 1322), pp. 26-27.

¹⁵ History of Iranian Literature (Dordrecht, 1968), p. 58.

¹⁶ Moḥammad Qazvini, "Moqaddama-e Qadim-e Shāhnāma," in Hezāra-e Ferdowsi (Teheran, 1322), pp. 123-148.

and remain only in name, such as the Book of Kings of Ibn al-Moqaffa', and several other Shāhnāmas such as those of Mas'udi Marvazi, Abu 'Ali Moḥammad ibn Aḥmad Balkhi, and Abu Mo'ayyad Balkhi.¹⁷ Thus by the time that Ferdowsi wrote his Shāhnāma there was ample precedent and abundant material available. Internal evidence indicates that one of the major sources of Ferdowsi's Shāhnāma was the prose Shāhnāma of Abu Maṣṣur ibn 'Abd al-Razzāq. What is clear however is that Ferdowsi's Shāhnāma derives from a work which itself was based upon the Khwadāy Nāmāg.¹⁸ There is a direct line of transmission from the (possible) collection of legends and sagas made at the time of Khosrow I through the Pahlavi Khwadāy Nāmāg, its Arabic translation and the Shāhnāma of Abu Maṣṣur to Shāhnāma of Ferdowsi. It is generally accepted that Ferdowsi was faithful to his sources, versifying what he had before him in prose and not adding material of his own invention.

Nöldeke has proved that the Syriac version of the Pseudo-Callisthenes Alexander story was translated from Pahlavi.¹⁹ In his study of this text he observes that in the Sassanian era the Iranians had only a very weak memory of Alexander. Other than the names Dārā/Dārāb and the fact

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 124-130.

¹⁸ See Nöldeke, Das iranische Nationalepos, 2nd ed. (Berlin, 1920), p. 17 ff.

¹⁹ "Beiträge," pp. 11-24.

that Darius was conquered by Alexander, they remembered almost nothing.²⁰ It appears that Nöldeke was speaking here primarily of the national tradition, for there was a very strong memory of Alexander preserved in the religious tradition. As mentioned above, in the ninth century Pahlavi books of the Zoroastrians, Alexander was uniformly detested and classified with Afrāsiyāb and Z̄ahāk as one of the three greatest enemies of Iran. Since this tradition appears only in the Pahlavi books, it could also be a later accretion influenced by the Pseudo-Callisthenes story.

If we accept Nöldeke's statement about the historical memory of the Sassanians with regard to Alexander, then from where did they get their information about him? Clearly it came from the Pahlavi translation of the Pseudo-Callisthenes novel. This must have been their principal if not their only document about the fall of the Achaemenians and the subsequent adventures of Alexander, for there is no evidence that any of the Greek historians were translated into Middle Persian. The Syriac version differs considerably, however, from the version which we have in Shāhnāma. If we take the "reduced" Shāhnāma story of Alexander as representing the core of what Ferdowsi found in his sources, we can assume that the story came down in this form from the Khwadāy Nāmag. Ḥamza of Isfahan in his Tārīkh Seni Moluk al-Arz va al-Anbiā' says that the author of one

²⁰ Ibid., p. 34.

of his sources complained that he had compared a number of versions of the Khwadāy Nāmag and they all differed, and the defects are ascribed to the incompetence of the translators.²¹ He does not say that material was added to make them different, only that there were defects or omissions. In another place one of his sources says that he compared over twenty copies of the Khwadāy Nāmag and corrected the dates of the reigns of the kings of Persia.²² If we remember that Rypka says that "many other versions appeared later on, some of which made use of this old translation, others again inserted episodes drawn from Middle Persian books, and others compared the versions . . ." ²³ we can see that there were a number of different versions of the Khwadāy Nāmag available to the ninth and tenth century writers, with the possibility of there being more than one version of the Alexander story. And this is exactly what we have. In Shāhnāma and in many works of the Islamic historians²⁴ we have the version in which Alexander is the son of Dārāb and Philip's daughter, and which ends in a manner unlike the Greek version. Some of the historians, Dinavari for example, are careful to say "according to the Persians, the story is thus and so,"²⁵ but they

²¹ Berlin, 1921 (based on Gottwaldt's ed.), p. 15.

²² Op. cit., p. 19.

²³ Op. cit., p. 58.

²⁴ E.g., Ṭabari, Bal'ami, Dinavari, Tha'ālebi.

²⁵ al-Akḥbār al-Ṭivāl, ed. V. Guirgass (Leiden, 1888), p. 31.

do not give alternate versions. Only in the case of Mojmal al-Tavārikh are both versions quoted. The author mentions Alexander as being the son of Dārāb, then goes on to say that he read in a Sekandar Nāma that he was the son of Nectanebos.²⁶ Nöldeke says that the author of Mojmal al-Tavārikh used an unknown Alexander book for this account,²⁷ but there seems to be a solution to this problem. We know that the Ethiopic version of the Pseudo-Callisthenes story was translated from the extant Syriac version. The Ethiopic version agrees in most of the main points with the Syriac version. At what date the Arabic version was made is not known but it is likely that it was during the period of great translation activity in early Abbasid times. It is known that many works were translated from Greek and Syriac, and the names of many of these works and their translators are given in al-Fehrest and other sources. The lost Arabic "Sekandar Nāma" then was undoubtedly the source of the story in Mojmal al-Tavārikh. This story was apparently not accepted by any of the other Iranian historians, and even in the case of Mojmal al-Tavārikh, both versions are cited.

Now we must discover what happened to the Alexander story between the Pahlavi translation of the Greek original and the versions we have today which have come down from the Khwadāy Nāmag. The story was Persianized, and

²⁶ Ed. M. T. Bahār (Teheran, 1318), p. 31.

²⁷ "Beiträge," p. 52.

this took place in very late Sassanian times. The evidence indicates that the story must have been deliberately changed from the Greek version, to fit the needs of a national history. By changing the story to make Alexander the half-brother of the last of the Achaemenians, who were also, no doubt, only very dimly remembered, the line of legitimate kings remained unbroken.²⁸ With no critical conception of historiography worse sins than this were perpetrated. As Boyce points out, "The priests, to enrich the bare sequence of royal successions [in the Xwatai Namak] evidently drew for the early period on the Kayanian minstrel epic. They had, however, no criteria of criticism by which to disentangle the stories in these minstrel-poems; and so the Saka Rustam and forgotten Arsacid princes--Frahād, Gōdarz and the rest--entered the chronicle in Kayanian company."²⁹ Not only were Arsacid princes companions of the Kayanians, but in Shāhnāma the true Arsacid period was reduced to only a fraction of its actual time span.

It can not be supposed that the Greek Pseudo-Callisthenes story was translated into Pahlavi after the fall of

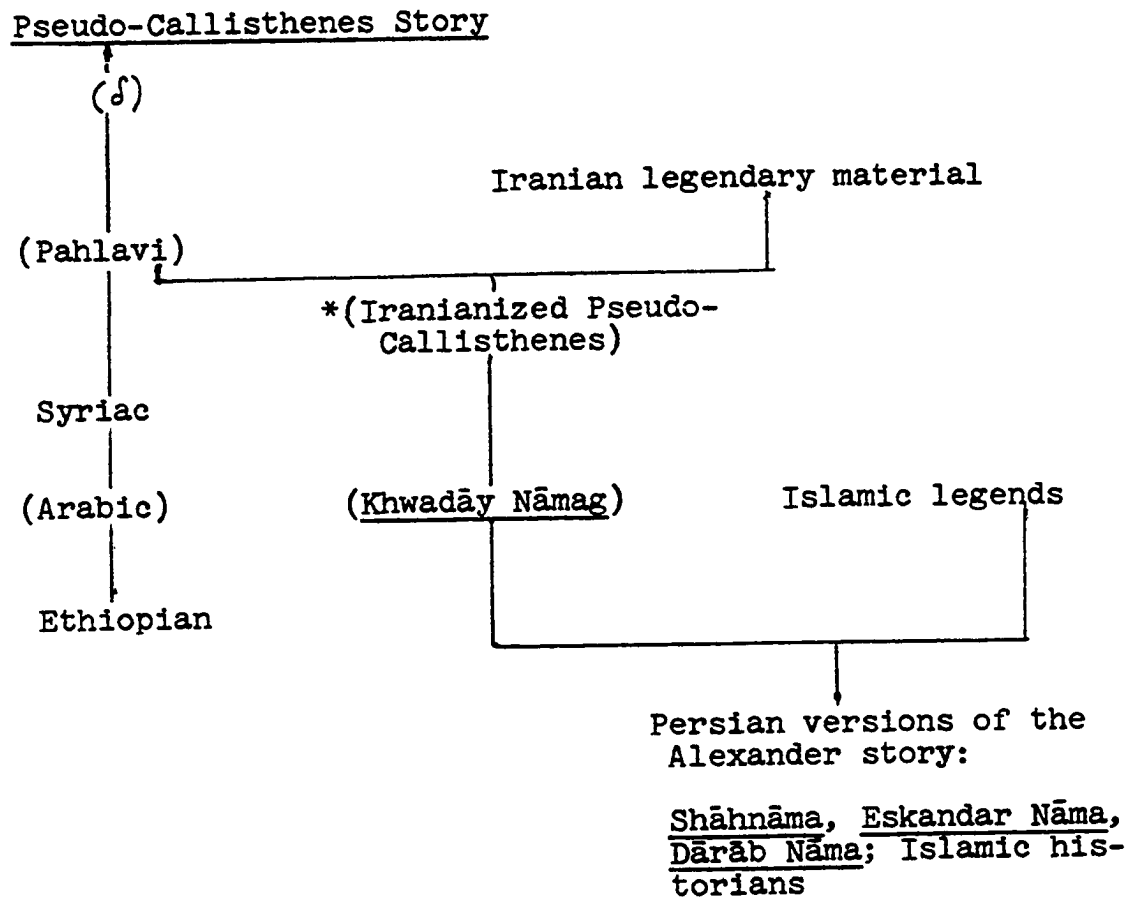
²⁸ M. Boyce, "Middle Persian Literature," in Handbuch der Orientalistik, ed. B. Spuler (Leiden, 1968), I, IV, 11, 58, says, "The true forerunners (geographically) of the Sasanians, the Achaemenians, exist in the chronicle only to provide, with the first and last Darius, an artificial link between these two dynasties."

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 58-59.

the Sassanians, for in that case the Khwadāy Nāmag would have had almost no information about Alexander.³⁰ Therefore when the Khwadāy Nāmag was being compiled, even though the Sassanians lacked critical criteria for determining historical accuracy, they knew what they liked and did not like. It is also possible that what the late Sassanians remembered of Alexander was already tinged with an Iranian color even before the Pseudo-Callisthenes novel was translated into Pahlavi. However it may have been, it appears that the Pseudo-Callisthenes story was deliberately changed when it was written into the official Book of Kings. In the three and a half centuries between the fall of the Sassanians and the composition of Shāhnāma, the story accumulated its tertiary or Islamic accretions, and

³⁰ Here I am in disagreement with Boyce. She says, *ibid.*, p. 59, "The compilers of the Xwatāi Nāmak further used written foreign sources where such were available, notably a Syriac version of the Alexander-Romance. The account which this gave of Alexander was at odds with Zoroastrian convictions, but it was nevertheless incorporated, and the discrepancies allowed to stand." There are two difficulties here. First, why would the compilers use a Syriac text when they had a Pahlavi text available? It does not seem reasonable to assume that the Pahlavi text was lost before the end of the Sassanian era. Second, from the above discussion it is apparent that the Pseudo-Callisthenes story was not incorporated into the Khwadāy Nāmag intact, but was radically changed to make it more Iranian and to make it conform to what would be desirable in a national history. The Iranianized version moreover, would probably do less damage to Zoroastrian sensibilities than the Greek version.

the relationships of the texts might be something like this:



The Alexander Story in Popular Literature

Taking the Shāhnāma Alexander story then as a model, albeit rather distantly removed, of what the late Sassanian official Alexander story must have been like, we may now proceed to the popular romances and see how the story developed on this level. We will first examine Eskandar Nāma and its relationship to Shāhnāma, since Eskandar Nāma is claimed to be by Pseudo-Callisthenes.

The text of Eskandar Nāma under discussion exists in

a manuscript which the editor claims to be unique, and which is defective at the beginning and end and also in a few places in the middle.³¹ From internal evidence it seems certain that the story was supposed to include a great many more of Alexander's adventures and conclude with his death.³² From the proportions of the book and the overly-long section containing battles against the Zangis, it seems likely that there was a second volume to the work. In any case we have 770 printed pages of text and rather little of what we should expect of the Alexander story. There is enough there to confirm its descent from the Pseudo-Callisthenes story, from which Shāhnāma also descends, but it would be more accurate to call it an anonymous Eskandar Nāma based on the Pseudo-Callisthenes romance.

Eskandar Nāma and Shāhnāma. The common points of Eskandar Nāma and Shāhnāma, the secondary and the tertiary accretions will be listed.

Common points:

- 1) The birth story.
- 2) Dārāb's defeat and flight to Kerman.
- 3) Alexander's marriage to daughter of King Keyd of India.
- 4) His visit to Queen Candace.

³¹ At least two other manuscripts of Eskandar Nāma exist. See A. Semenov, Opisanie Tadzhikskikh, Persidskikh, Arabskikh i Tiurkskikh rukopisei Fundamental'noi Biblioteki Sredneaziatskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta Im. V. I. Lenina. Vypusk 2 (Tashkent, 1956), pp. 13-14.

³² p. 360, and Introduction, p. 34.

5) His visit to Chin and Māchin.

Secondary accretions to Eskandar Nāma:

1) Dārāb is the son of a Hindu princess of Kashmir.

2) Dārāb's flight to Kerman.

3) Roxanne is descended from Gudarz on her mother's side.

4) Roxanne's early death.

5) The Kashmir campaign against King Āzād Bakht.

6) The visit to Māchin where the king is descended from Garsivaz.

7) Alexander's killing of a Central Asian king in revenge for the death of Siāvush.

8) His visit to Afrāsiyāb's city.

9) His visit to the Ru'in Dezh.

It can be seen from this short list how the storyteller has attempted to Iranianize the story by inserting material from Shāhnāma (or the national legend in some other form), and by having Dārāb's wife Roxanne be a descendant of (what was then considered) one of the great princely families. This latter is a result of the process described by Boyce (quoted above).³³ One strongly suspects the influence of Shāhnāma in the secondary accretions.

Tertiary accretions to Eskandar Nāma:

1) Alexander is identified numerous times with Zu al-Qarneyn.

³³ See note 29.

2) Alexander's refusal to marry Dārāb's wife on the grounds that he already has four legal wives and forty concubines.

3) The campaign in 'Oman. (This might be a secondary accretion, reflecting late Sassanian campaigns in the southern Arabian peninsula.)

4) The change from brass figures of horsemen to firethrowers mounted on elephants in the battle with Porus.

5) The multiple marriages of Alexander, after Dārāb's death. He marries at least six more times.

6) The forced conversion of the Kashmiris and others.

7) The visit to Adam's tomb in Ceylon.

8) The episode of the devāl-pās, a group of strap-legged men who afflict humans.

9) The episode where Alexander settles the legitimacy struggle in Mecca.

10) The campaign in Yemen (see (3) above.).

11) The journey to the West, the Darkness, the water of life, Khezr, and Mt. Qāf.

12) The Kipchak campaign.

13) The meeting with a people who seem to represent the Khazars.

14) The visit to the kingdom of Taghmāj.

15) The extended campaign against the divs, Zangis, Turks, Russians, Pil-gushān, etc.

Dārāb Nāma and Shāhnāma. Comparing the "reduced" Shāhnāma story with the "reduced" Dārāb Nāma, we find the fol-

lowing:

Common points:

- 1) The birth story.
- 2) Aristotle as a tutor to Alexander during his childhood.
- 3) Dārāb's death and last wishes.
- 4) Defeat of Porus' army with brass figures of horsemen.
- 5) Discovery of an island which is really the back of a huge fish.
- 6) Alexander's discovery of a land of snakes.
- 7) Alexander's burial in a golden coffin.

Secondary accretions to Dārāb Nāma:

- 1) Philip of Macedon is of the race of Feridun and a descendant of Key Qobad.
- 2) Alexander is exposed as an infant.
- 3) He is nourished by a goat and guarded by a lion.
- 4) Philip crowns Alexander king.
- 5) Alexander's argument with Aristotle and his symbolic loss of the farr.
- 6) The first battle against Dārāb being at the Euphrates, not the Tigris.
- 7) Alexander pays the assassins to kill Dārāb.
- 8) Burān Dokht's posing as Bahman-e Gudarziān, and her club which Alexander recognizes as having belonged to Gudarz, and which he is unable to lift.
- 9) The campaign against Burān Dokht before their marriage, and all of their subsequent adventures together.

10) The conquest of the descendants of Pashang.

11) The adventure with the queen of the hermaphrodites, who is a daughter of Dārāb (the father) and a Greek woman.

12) The death of Burān Dokht in Iran.

Since the text of Dārāb Nāma is complete and ends with the death of Alexander, we should expect more secondary and tertiary accretions than we found in Eskandar Nāma. Here the Persianization continues with the emphasis on bloodlines again. There are fewer incidents which could have come directly from Shāhnāma and more of a general Iranian nature. There is a scene where Alexander argues with Aristotle and is caused to lose all of his accumulated wisdom. In this scene Aristotle curses Alexander and calls upon God to remove from Alexander all that Aristotle has taught him. That night Alexander dreams that he has gone blind and nobody will take his hand to help him. In fear he wakes up and calls for a light. "They brought a candle at once. Alexander asked, 'Why was there not a light at the head of my bed tonight?' They replied, 'Oh King, there was a light, but it went out.'"³⁴ This suggests the departure of the farr from Jamshid. Alexander then proceeds to moralize on this disaster. This incident and the whole Burān Dokht story, which represents the survival of a memory of the goddess Anahita, show that Dārāb Nāma contains deep Iran-

³⁴ Dārāb Nāma, p. 447.

ian memories, flickers of light which reflect the oldest myths which the Iranians have. Here are two examples of deeper levels of the Iranian psyche emerging briefly in the tale of a medieval Persian storyteller.

There is again the link with the family of Gudarz, the Arsacid prince who has his place among the Kayanian kings in the national epic. Philip is of the race of Feridun by virtue of being descended from Salm who was given possession of Asia Minor when Feridun divided up the world. This is a common kind of genealogical attribution, but the link to the Gudarziān in both Eskandar Nāma and Dārāb Nāma is more difficult to explain.

Tertiary accretions to Dārāb Nāma:

- 1) Alexander's early skill in dream interpreting.
- 2) The remarriage of Alexander's mother Nāhid to a prince of Barbar.
- 3) Alexander working in his youth as an astrologer and dream interpreter.
- 4) Alexander's childhood adventures such as hiding in an oven, being surprised in the harem with his mother, and his aunt's attempted seduction of him.
- 5) Alexander's march to the Barbar and his killing of his step-father.
- 6) Forced conversions of conquered peoples.
- 7) The fantastic adventures in India, such as the mountain surrounded by water, a city full of tall men, a huge bird which carries off an elephant, fighting against

cannibals, and a tree planted by Adam and Eve suggestive of a tree of life.

8) The visit to Adam's tomb.

9) Encounters with dog-headed men, a city of women, sun-worshippers, Zangis, and Plato.

10) Adventures with Loqmān, Khezr, and Elyās.

11) Adventures with paris and divs.

12) The trip to Mt. Qāf.

13) The defeat of the magicians.

14) The episode at Mecca.

15) Various wonders such as twin disappearing cities, a large tree full of spiders, quicksand, another tree planted by Adam, a spring whose water is a panacea, the devāl-pās, the wall of Gog and Magog.

16) The trip to the Darkness, the water of life, and Alexander's me'rāj to the summit of Mt. Qāf.

17) A talking statue.

18) The conversion of the inhabitants of Andalusia.

19) The final moral of the story.

From this list it can be seen how heavy is the Islamic overlay on this story. Besides the events mentioned, the tale is interlarded with numerous stories of saints and pious men, all Islamic. In (16) above, a wonderful talking horse carries Alexander to the top of Mt. Qāf, where he sees bands of angels. The horse later brings him back down. This would seem to be a reference to the me'rāj of the Prophet Moḥammad, thus identifying Alexander

even more closely with Islam.

In the process of Persianization of the Alexander story there are elements which are common to at least two and sometimes all three of these versions. The birth story is common to all three and is the fundamental alteration in the story in the direction of Persianization. Next there is some genealogical information in Eskandar Nāma and Dārāb Nāma, and common to these texts also is the linking of Dārāb's daughter, Roxanne or Burān Dokht, to the family of Gudarz. In Shāhnāma and Dārāb Nāma there is an emphasis on the actual process whereby Alexander becomes king. In Shāhnāma Philip makes him crown prince, in Dārāb Nāma Philip makes him king. In Shāhnāma and Dārāb Nāma there is the first battle at the Euphrates. Shāhnāma and Eskandar Nāma have Alexander visit Central Asia, Chin and Māchin. Finally there is an attempt in all three texts to link Alexander with the Iranian heroic past by having him (in Shāhnāma) find the treasure of Key Khosrow, by having him kill a Central Asian king in revenge for the death of Siāvush, visit Afrāsiyāb's city and the Ru' in Dezh in Eskandar Nāma, and in Dārāb Nāma having him conquer the descendants of Pashang. On this same level, certain elements from folklore have entered the story, particularly Dārāb Nāma. These are possibly but not necessarily from Iranian folklore, as they are common themes in folk tales and myths from various parts of the world. Examples of these are the exposure of an infant of royal birth who later

grows up to be famous and powerful. Accompanying this motif are the motifs of being suckled by a wild animal and guarded from harm by another, in Dārāb Nāma a goat and a lion respectively. All these have antecedents in Iranian mythology, such as the story of Dārāb being put into a box and floated down the Euphrates as an infant, and the exposure of the infant Zāl. The same Zāl was brought up and protected in later life by the simorgh. One also thinks of the stories of Moses, Oedipus, Romulus and Remus, and other such tales from literature or folklore. Therefore in Dārāb Nāma these can not be taken as purely Persianizing. The tertiary accretions are Islamic and therefore not relevant to this discussion, since at the time when these tales took their present form, a distinctly Iranian form of Islam had not yet become predominant in Persia.

The Personality of Alexander in the Polite Literature

We have seen how the structure and content of the Alexander story has become Persianized, and to round out the discussion it will be interesting to see how the personality of Alexander has also undergone certain changes in the literature of Iran. It is here that sharp differences appear between the versions in the polite and in the popular literature. We will examine the polite literature first.

The picture of Alexander in Shāhnāma is a positive one. He has an auspicious birth and in his youth he shows signs of bravery, skill, leadership and the other qualities which make for greatness. He refuses Dārā's demand for

tribute with the famous remark that the goose which used to lay golden eggs is now dead. Up until Dārā's death, Alexander's good character is opposed to Dārā's rather bad character. The Persian king is described as an impetuous, rash youth when he takes the throne, and until his dying speech there is nothing to contradict this early characterization. After Dārā dies, Alexander acts in a chivalrous manner toward Dārā's widow and daughter, even to the extent of fetching his own mother from Alexandria to bring Dārā's daughter to him for the marriage.

On the way to India Alexander, through sheer oratory and force of example shames his rebellious troops into loyal obedience. He kills Porus, the huge Indian, in single combat. Later in the story he defeats and then pardons a son-in-law of Porus who wanted revenge on Alexander for his father's death. All in all he is shown as brave, clever, wise and forgiving.

The historians present a more mixed picture, but on the whole, positive. Ḥamza of Isfahan is less generous. He says, "After Alexander had gained control of the land of Babel and conquered the people there, he envied what they had brought together of the sciences which other peoples of the world had not attained, and he burned all the books which he could lay his hands on; then he set about killing the Mobeds and Herbeds and learned men and doctors and those who were trying to record the chronology of their people through these sciences, and even the common

people. After this he had all the useful books translated into Greek."³⁵ Later he says, "After Alexander had conquered Darius and overcome Fars, he began brutal actions and much blood-letting. He imprisoned seven thousand of the great men of Iran. They were in his army and every day he killed twenty-one of them."³⁶ He mentions some cities which Alexander is said to have destroyed, repeats the story that Alexander built twelve famous Alexandrias, and finally, with regard to Babylon, Ḥamza says, "Then after conquering Iran he attacked India and the Far East and was victorious wherever he went. Then he returned to the ancient city which when it was prosperous was the seat of the Chaldean kings, with the idea of restoring what he had destroyed. However, when he neared there he died from a dose of poison which he had been given."³⁷ This gloomy picture is only paralleled in the Zoroastrian writings mentioned above, where Alexander is cursed as a destroyer, and ranked as one of the three most dangerous enemies of Iran.

Mas'udi presents Alexander in a good light by telling the story, which also appears in Shāhnāma, of the twenty-nine sages who spoke well of Alexander as they gathered

³⁵ Op. cit., p. 18.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 29

³⁷ Ibid., p. 55.

around his coffin.³⁸ Dinavari calls him a conceited rebel who acted with excess and pride, but nevertheless is respectful of him and emphasizes his efforts on behalf of monotheism.³⁹ The author of Mojmal al-Tavārikh quotes Ibn Khallikān who ranked Alexander with Ardashir and Abu Moslem as men who changed a government from one group to another.⁴⁰ In another place he says, "And Alexander asked for Roxanne in marriage, and it is for this reason that the Iranians became partial (havā-ju) to Alexander."⁴¹

Bal'ami emphasizes Darius' bad character when he says, "Darius was an oppressive king and the leaders of his army were all against him,"⁴² and "when they first met in battle at Mosul they camped there a month and many of

³⁸ Moruj al-Zahab, ed. and trans. Barbier de Meynard, 9 vols. (Paris, 1861-1917), II, 251-257.

³⁹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 32-34.

⁴⁰ P. 327.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 56. In a footnote to this Bahār adds the following comment: "The Iranians were never partial to Alexander, for in all the religious and literary books of the Iranians before Islam Alexander was called Alexander the Cursed [here he gives examples]. But the Arabs, in spite of the Iranians, imagining that Alexander was a Christian and a Byzantine, and that the Moslems were partisans of the Byzantine Empire and the Christians, glorified and praised this oppressor, this corrupted destroyer of civilizations, to the Iranians. This practice found its way into later Persian legends."

⁴² Tārikh-e Bal'ami, ed. M. T. Bahār and M. P. Gonābādi (Teheran, 1321), p. 694.

Darius' soldiers went over to Alexander."⁴³ He continues, "After Darius' death Alexander mustered the two armies and pledged them justice,"⁴⁴ and "after killing Darius' murderers, he took nobody prisoner from the army or the people, and never destroyed a place after it had submitted."⁴⁵

Ibn Balkhi in his Fārs Nāma has much the same attitude. He says that Darius was a man of bad character, and that he and his vizier so oppressed the people that when Alexander attacked, many of the nobles and leaders went over to him.⁴⁶ Then he says that Alexander was a very clever, wise and learned man with sound judgment and manliness, and that he obeyed God and followed the path of justice among the people. The reasons why he attacked Iran were 1) Darius' insulting demand for tribute, 2) Darius' former vizier was afraid of Darius and encouraged Alexander, 3) Darius was a bad character and a tyrant and his vizier had bad judgment and the army and the people were all afraid of him.⁴⁷

Tha'ālebi sums up Alexander's character in the following paragraph, "He had eyes of different colors which is a favorable sign in men, but not so in horses. He avoided

⁴³ Ibid., p. 696.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 698.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 699.

⁴⁶ Ed. G. Le Strange and R. Nicholson (London, 1921; reprinted 1962), p. 56.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 57.

intercourse with women, sought the company of wise men, held philosophers and philosophy in high regard, profited from the lessons of his teacher Aristotle, acted according to his principles and followed his examples. He did not use force to convert people to his religion but left them to themselves to pursue the beliefs and opinions which they had chosen. He was severe with the powerful, kind to the weak and liked to perform good deeds. After having destroyed the fortress and other buildings in Irānshahr to satisfy his desire, he founded the above-mentioned, repairing that which he had broken. He restored more than he destroyed and his constructions were superior to those which he had demolished. He constantly travelled the world, gathering and never giving, amassing gold, silver and jewels of great value, desiring especially to possess precious metals. Avarice predominated in him over generosity and he preferred economy to prodigality."⁴⁸

In the andarz literature the picture of Alexander is uniformly that of a wise sage. A representative passage from Siar al-Moluk says, "And notice how the names of kings who were wise have remained great in the world, and they have gone great deeds which will carry their names in honor until the day of resurrection, like Feridun and Alexander and Ardashir and Anoshirvān the Just . . ."⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Tārīkh Ghorar al-Siar, ed. and trans. H. Zotenberg (Paris, 1900; repr. Teheran, 1963), p. 443.

⁴⁹ Ed. H. Darke (Teheran, 1340), p. 76.

The following two passages are representative of those in Qābus Nāma. "Although a woman may be kind and beautiful and pleasing to you, do not place yourself completely in her hands and do not be under her command, for when they said to Alexander, 'Why do you not marry the daughter of Darius, for she is a good woman?' he replied, 'It would be very bad if someone like me who has conquered the people of the world should have a woman conquer him.'"⁵⁰ Again, "I have heard that Alexander went to war against an enemy and they said to him, 'Oh King, this enemy of ours is inattentive; we should make a night attack on him.' Alexander replied, 'No man may be called a king who seeks victory by theft.'"⁵¹

In the Ādāb al-Ḥarb of Fakhr-e Modabber, it is stated that if Darius had not gone to war then Zu al-Qarneyn would not have gone to war and all the bloodshed would have been avoided.⁵² Again, when advised that Darius was not worth Alexander's spending his efforts to conquer, Alexander replied that the lion takes the same caution in capturing the fox as it does in capturing the wild ass.⁵³

We can see from the foregoing that the tendency to

⁵⁰ Ed. Gh. Yusofi (Teheran, 1345), p. 130.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 238.

⁵² Ed. A. S. Khwānsāri (Teheran, 1346), p. 173. In this text Alexander and Zu al-Qarneyn are identified as one person.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 373.

idealize famous rulers of the past has worked to the extreme in the case of Alexander. This is not an uncommon process in Persian history, and another outstanding example is Maḥmud of Ghazna. We find opinions of Alexander ranging from the very lowest in the Zoroastrian writings to the highest in such works as Tha'ālebi's Ghorar and the Islamic andarz literature. In general Alexander comes off well, and even in the Zoroastrian writings he is linked with redoubtable, albeit detested, warriors. He always has a greatness about him, for he did things in a great way. Even when Ḥamza of Isfahan calls him a killer and destroyer, his killing and havoc were on a grand scale. When he built he built whole cities which later became great urban centers, and he named them all after himself. The Iranians might not always have admired him, but they saw nothing petty or cowardly or weak in him. It is strange to discover that this picture is entirely the opposite in the popular romances.

The Personality of Alexander in Popular Literature

Dārāb Nāma will be considered first. As a youth, Alexander is pictured in this romance as being intelligent, moralistic, and given to sermonizing. His early education with Aristotle is in dream interpretation and astrology, and he has considerable commercial success practicing these skills. Yet these are hardly the skills which are traditionally taught young men who are destined for future greatness. There is no mention of his learning to ride,

shoot a bow and arrow, tell the truth or any of the other conventional parts of an upper-class youth's education. He is not physically brave and is often involved in difficulties with women (e.g., pp. 397-98; 417-18) having to escape by hiding in a trunk on one occasion and on another, by concealing himself in an oven for seven days. (p. 424). He disguises himself in a woman's clothes and one time is saved only by divine intervention (pp. 417-18). On the two occasions when he is confronted by danger, he chooses flight instead of resistance. He generally gets by on his cleverness and good looks rather than on manliness or courage.

In a violent argument with his teacher Aristotle, which follows a long tirade of Aristotle's against Iran and the Iranians,⁵⁴ Alexander threatens Aristotle who then curses him and asks that all his wisdom be taken away. This is the symbolic loss of farr. Alexander loses much in this exchange, because after this never does he show real signs of intelligence or imagination.

His conduct during his campaign with Darius is straightforward, but when Burān Dokht comes on the scene Alexander begins to look inadequate again. He is unable to defeat her in battle. He shuns single combat with her, and on one occasion (MS fol. 194b) he can not even lift her club. Later when their relationship has become more

⁵⁴ Pp. 444-46. This is surely a later addition to the text, as it is quite out of character.

stable, he asks her to help him because he is unable to undertake the Indian campaign without her. In the campaign against Porus, she captures Keyd, the king of India (MS fol. 240b) and Porus (MS fol. 244b). They escape and Alexander must appeal again to Burān Dokht for a plan, having none of his own. He has no initiative or imagination and is entirely in the hands of Aristotle and an Indian advisor. He spends much of his time wondering what to do.

In another incident, some sages come to Alexander from the people of India and ask him why he has come. Alexander shows no presence of mind, can not answer, and the sages must tell him why he came. When asked what gifts he brought with him, he again is tongue-tied and asks Aristotle what to say. Finally Alexander the world-conqueror kneels to the sages and puts dust on his head.

His timidity is further shown in two episodes. In one, Alexander discovers a mountain with a castle full of magicians on it. His impulse is to flee in fear but Burān Dokht says, "You be quiet until I make a plan.'" (MS fol. 272a). When a huge bird comes and carries off an elephant Alexander is afraid and wants to leave. His Indian advisor tells him to stay, as he will see even stranger sights. (MS fol. 274b). Later when he asks Burān Dokht what plan to adopt, she says to him in exasperation, "I am only a woman. You make the plans!" (MS fol. 277b).

He is foolish and headstrong too, for example when

(MS fol. 342b) a large colorful bird warns him to go away. He refuses to heed the warning and the bird brings thousands of other birds, each carrying a stone in its beak to drop on Alexander.⁵⁵ Another time Plato urges him to seize a turtle which is passing by, and Alexander angrily refuses. It is a sorcerer in disguise and later brings them much trouble. (MS fol. 360b).

The hero in Persian popular literature is usually of human dimensions but with an extra quality which sets him above his fellow men. Up to this point Alexander is shown as a hero in name only. It is difficult to understand how the listener to this story was meant to be convinced of Alexander's heroic qualities. The answer seems to be that Alexander was deliberately pictured as almost an anti-hero, to use the modern term. His weakness, vacillation, indecision, slowness of mind and narrowness of thought all go to describe an individual of human size and inglorious character. His failings are those of the average man, but he has no inherent greatness to balance them. He is active as a Moslem missionary however, and this might have been some consolation to the medieval audience.

In Eskandar Nāma the situation is quite different. Here, in addition to being a bumbling and indecisive world-conqueror, Alexander is a slave to an overwhelming and almost fatal passion for women and sex. His pious statement to the dying Darius, "God forbid that I should marry your

⁵⁵ Cf. Koran CV.

wife, for I have four legal wives and forty concubines, some from here and some from Rum,"⁵⁶ contrasts sharply with his subsequent behavior, as we shall see.

Early in the Indian campaign Alexander marries the daughter of Porus (p. 23). Then comes the first of a number of rather explicit descriptions of his sexual prowess. In this episode Alexander is embarrassed, but the fault is not his, because he has been enchanted.

"When the girl [a princess from Kashmir] went to bed with Alexander, the king attempted but was unable to deflower her. He waited for the rest of that night and tried again on the following night. Again he was unable. The king was very embarrassed with the girl and he never spoke of this condition, for in Rum he had deflowered forty virgins in one night." (p. 28).

Later, when the spell is broken, Alexander summons one of his concubines to bring him a cool drink. She poisons the drink, sets it before him and pulls off his boots. "And Alexander was extraordinarily lustful and desirous of women. As soon as she had put down the cup, he said to her, 'first we will have intercourse, then we will drink this.' God worked his will in this affair too, and the woman's desire was aroused and she slept with Alexander. When he had finished having intercourse he mused for a while and thought, 'this girl has never been like this before.' He suspected treachery but said nothing. 'Bring

⁵⁶ Eskandar Nāma, p. 11.

the sharbat,' he said. When the woman looked at Alexander she saw fear in his face. She then became afraid and wondered what had come over the king. 'Maybe he knows that I am trying to poison him . . . for whenever Alexander comes to me he is never satisfied with having intercourse only one or two times, and he has never had it less than five times in one bedding.'" (p. 39).

Shortly after this Aristotle cautions Alexander against an excess of sexual activity. Alexander pays no attention and proceeds to marry the daughter of Keyd. Following the Mecca episode is a campaign in Yemen, motivated by Alexander's desire for a Yemeni princess and it ends with his marrying her.

Another one of his failings as a world leader is his desire to indulge his idle curiosity. There is a long episode in which he tries to find the reason for some grains of wheat being found in the handle of a dagger. This leads to an incident where Alexander defends the honor of an innocent young girl against the false charges of two evil monks. He then marries a Central Asian princess, having previously married an Egyptian one.

Now follows another attempted poisoning, with more details of his sex practices. "The king sat with that girl for a while, and of course he was not used to eating in the evening. At the time of retirement he used to drink water, and after that he would not drink any more water. This was because he never passed a night without intercourse and the doctors had told him that under no circum-

stances should he drink water after intercourse, for it is harmful. The king wanted to retire at once and satisfy this girl and then call the other one." (p. 265).

In still another attempt on his life, one of his concubines comes to him. He suspects her and reasons that if he does not have intercourse with her she will suspect something and not dare go to sleep. He does so and the girl sleeps while Alexander remains awake all night trying to work out what to do. "At the end of the night the king had intercourse with her another time, and he had never done this with her before. The girl was pleased." (p. 302-303).

Alexander, because of his involvement with paris and divs, has been given certain charms against harm to himself and his army. Twice he forgets to draw the required magic circle, and the result is that one night he loses a thousand men, and on the other night Aristotle is kidnaped. Meanwhile he has married a girl whom he rescued from being the bride of a Zangi king. One night some paris surprise him having intercourse, and as soon as he has finished they carry him off, for they notice that while he was with the woman he had temporarily laid aside his protective charm. (p. 361).

Alexander is not the only character who has a preoccupation with sex however. The queen of the paris, Arāqit, is described (p. 364) as having a strong desire for men because her mother had been human and her father a pari.

Alexander marries her, at the same time refusing to promise her that he will have no more women. He brags to her (p. 407) that God has given him the strength to have intercourse ninety times a night. He allots her three nights a week and the remaining four nights are given to other women. Soon after this Alexander finds a girl who is destined to be the bride of a Zangi, and marries her. This precipitates a crisis of jealousy in the pari queen, who falls unconscious and afterward does not cease to make trouble for Alexander. He finally becomes so distracted by the jealousy of the queen that he admits (p. 573) that "this condition was worse for the king than all the battles of the enemy." The storyteller describes Alexander (p. 587) as "having gone crazy between his love for the queen and his sense of honor as a king."

Three times in the course of the story divine intervention is necessary to save Alexander from poisoning at the hands of a woman. It worked the opposite way once (p. 623) when he was captured by the enemy. The reason given by the storyteller is that this is divine recompense for having killed a pregnant woman.

The queen of the paris is very warlike when she chooses to be, and often she takes the field and defeats the enemy for Alexander. In fact he must depend upon her in several instances. When she is jealous though, she plots against him and makes things difficult for his other women.

Before the text breaks off Alexander marries twice

more, the second time under the following conditions stipulated by the woman: "But, she said, there are conditions which I will impose on the king. One is that in the evening I be allowed to pray to God and that each week I shall come to the king on two nights and the other five nights I will spend in the house of God; and another is that you place no woman over me and that I have precedence over them all and that whatever I say, they shall do, for I say only things which will be acceptable to God." (p. 725).

This woman, Zobeyda, and the queen of the paris became jealous rivals and Alexander is forced to decide in favor of the queen in the matter of precedence. "And Arāqit's turn was twice a week, and the king increased it to three nights. Two nights were for Zobeyda and two nights were for other women. The king reckoned the days as well as the nights, and they say that on any night when Alexander did not have intercourse twelve times, the following day he felt weak." (p. 729).

The storyteller, as if to emphasize his conception of Alexander as a world-conqueror obsessed by women, quotes the wise men as having said that there are two things in this world of which there is nothing better: one is giving orders and the other is intercourse with women. (p. 756).

Here we have been given a picture of Alexander quite at variance with that presented in the polite literature. We may recall what Tha^ʿālebi said in his summary of Alexander's character, and the anecdote quoted from Qābus Nāma,

which is repeated in Siar al-Moluk. Alexander's reputation for being abstemious and wary of women is supported by Athenaeus (fl. 2nd century A.D.) where he says that Alexander was very self-controlled when it came to the observance of decency and the best form. When he captured the wife and daughters of Darius he treated them well and did not even let them know that they were captives. He treated them just as if Darius were still king.⁵⁷

The popular picture of Alexander shows just the opposite of this. I have emphasized the sensual aspect of Alexander's character in Eskandar Nāma for two reasons. First because of the heavy emphasis placed upon it by the storyteller, and second because such explicit sexual description in the popular romances is unprecedented. In none of the other romances under study does any detailed account of a character's sex life appear. On the contrary, the tone of the other romances is extremely chaste, even to the point of being tiresome.

Persian popular literature has always contained some rather explicit sexual descriptions, an example being in the popular story Salim-e Javāheri. The Alf Layla va Layla has its share of sexual passages, and one may safely assume that on the popular level, at the time when these romances were being told, descriptions of sex were not absent from this genre. Yet only in Eskandar Nāma do we find such matter. In the other romances, if a sexual scene

⁵⁷ XIII, 603.

is described, which is rarely, it is described in flowery and euphemistic language with nothing explicitly stated. An example of this is the description of Khorshid Shāh consummating his marriage with Mah Pari in Samak-e 'Ayyār. "Then the king called Mah Pari and embraced her, and grasped the bonds of love and opened the curtain of longing, and rode the steed of desire onto the field of attainment. He strung the bow of joy and placed in it the arrow of union. He struck the target of Mah Pari and clove the divine seal. The arrow passed through the target and both of them found peace from that wound, and their pleasure and happiness increased from that union."⁵⁸ This is very different in style and intent from the blunt, straightforward descriptions in Eskandar Nāma.

The problem is how to understand this break with convention in Eskandar Nāma. It is clear that through some unknown and probably unknowable process the figure of Alexander in the popular tradition was made to appear ridiculous. In both Eskandar Nāma and Dārāb Nāma we see an Alexander who is at once a famous world-conqueror and a bumbling, ineffectual leader beset by indecision, fear and lust for women. In other words, Alexander is reduced to the level of an ordinary prosaic human being. If we consider the creators of this literature and its audience, this change becomes easier to accept. Unsophisticated in both content and language, these romances were meant for

⁵⁸ Samak-e 'Ayyār, II, 66.

the entertainment of people who were not educated to enjoy the artificial elegances of Marzbān Nāma and Sendbād Nāma, or the poetry of Neẓāmi. The popular romances came out of the world of the common man and to a large degree reflected that world. While in the other romances the ideals of javānmardi were held up to the audience, in Eskandar Nāma some of the problems which beset the ordinary man in his daily life as a sexual human being are seen. What has happened in Eskandar Nāma is that a perennially comic figure, that of the man with multiple wives and all the attendant problems, has been projected upon Alexander the Great, making him into something which everybody can understand and in some way identify with. The figure of Alexander represents the conflict inherent in the male-dominated, female secluding society of medieval Iran.⁵⁹ This is the contrast between the male's dream of having an unlimited number of women at his disposal, and the very real problems connected with having more than one wife. Since Alexander is the only character in the romances thus portrayed, and since Alexander in Dārāb Nāma is also made into a figure more human than Godlike, one can only conclude that there was a strong tradition concerning Alexander in the popular mind. Its source is not known, and only if further Alexander romances come to light can we

⁵⁹ For example, there are numerous references in the romances to women donning a chādor before appearing in public, as well as to veiled faces and the andarun or haram. Noble women always travel in a curtained howdah.

begin to see it in a broader perspective. It is possible that it is connected with the pre-Islamic Zoroastrian view of Alexander, but if this be so, then it remains to be explained why it survived only in the popular literature. The final irony in both Dārāb Nāma and Eskandar Nāma is that in both of these romances Alexander is given invaluable military aid by a woman.

In conclusion, we have seen that all of the Iranian versions of the Alexander story descend from a radically altered version of the Pseudo-Callisthenes Alexander romance. This romance was translated from Greek into Pahlavi in the late Sassanian era, and from Pahlavi it went into Syriac, thence to Arabic and Ethiopian. The Pahlavi and Arabic versions no longer exist but a good idea of their contents and form can be gained from the existing Syriac and Ethiopian texts.

When a national history was being compiled during the reign of Yazdgerd III, the legend of Alexander from the Pseudo-Callisthenes romance was included in it in a changed form. In its new form the story of Alexander was adjusted to make it more compatible with the national tradition. The changed story relates Alexander to the Iranian ruling house in such a way as to lessen the psychological effect of his conquest of Iran, save the national pride of the Iranians, and provide for an unbroken line of legitimate kings from the first of the Achaemenians to the last of the Sassanians.

The national tradition provided the form of the Alexander story which was transmitted in the polite literature. In this literature, which includes the versions of Ferdowsi and Neẓāmi, and the andarz literature, Alexander is seen as a world-conqueror, larger than life, and he is accorded a certain respect. He is idealized in the andarz literature and represented as a sage.

In the popular tradition the conception of Alexander is fundamentally different. As expressed in the popular romances, this conception shows Alexander as a man-sized figure with all the defects, physical or psychological, which are found in the ordinary mortal. Here he has not only become Persianized but is involved in a profound cultural irony. Instead of the self-controlled sage of the andarz tradition, in the popular romances he is an ineffectual comic figure⁶⁰ assisted in all his efforts by a woman. Where tradition would have a man perform a certain deed, the romances show Alexander performing it with the direct or indirect aid of a woman. Often the deed is performed by a woman without the presence of Alexander at all. It is in this way that he has become a comic figure instead of an idealized hero in the popular tradition. No comparable example of this process is to be found in the other romances.

⁶⁰ Alexander is a comic figure here in the sense that he is being made to appear ridiculous.

Javānmardi

Introduction

Javānmardi or its Arabic equivalent fotovvat is a subject on which much has been written but about which little is known. Its manifestations in the Arabic countries and Turkey are better known than its form and development in Iran, mainly because of the existence of a greater body of pertinent literature in Arabic and Turkish. Relatively less of this literature has come to light in Iran, and it is this lack of "official" literature which makes the popular romances important as sources of information about javānmardi. Javānmardi as an institution in Iran and Turkey was spread and encouraged by the popular romances under discussion. It also forms the most pervasive theme in the romances, appearing in the general form of the ideals which govern the actions of the Iranian heroes, and in the specific form of 'ayyāri and the adventures of the 'ayyārs. These romances, if carefully studied, can shed new light on the subject and at the same time give it an entirely new perspective, i.e., javānmardi as seen not from the top but from the bottom, from the eyes of the actual javānmardān (adherents to the principles and practices of javānmardi). Thus the romances are a mirror of javānmardi and as such are a rich source for the social historian. In this chapter the general background of javānmardi will be briefly described. Then the

specifically Persian aspects of it as reflected in the romances will be discussed in an attempt to show javānmardi in its popular conception.

Fotovvat is the term used to describe the institution of javānmardi in the Arabic speaking world, while the Persian term applies specifically to its Iranian development. The basic meaning of fatā' in Arabic is that of "youth," "young man," "youthful behavior." This was extended to mean, 1) a set of virtues such as generosity, magnanimity, chivalry,¹ the virtues of a youth, and 2) an organization of youth or men devoted to the cultivation of these principles.² In pre-Islamic Arabia fatā', as used by the early poets, implied two virtues, 1) hospitality and liberality, and 2) bravery. These two virtues always remained the basic ideals of fotovvat or javānmardi regardless of what other ideals were adopted at different times and places. As individuals who represented the highest form of these ideals there is Ḥātem al-Ṭā'i who symbolizes munificence and generosity, and 'Alī ibn Abi Ṭāleb who symbolizes bravery.³

¹ On the question of fotovvat as an Islamic equivalent to the medieval European order of chivalry, see G. Salinger, "Was the Futuwa an Oriental Form of Chivalry?" Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society, SCIV(1950), pp. 481-93.

² F. Taeschner, "Futuwa," Schweizerisches Archiv für Volkskunde, LII(1956), p. 122.

³ Ibid., pp. 125-26.

The origins of the organizations of fityān/javānmard-ān are obscure, but some general outlines may be discerned in Sassanian Persia. Pigulevskaja reports that in the sixth century A.D. the Iranian artisans were organized into corporations according to their trade. These included not only the artisans such as jewellers or workers in lead and other metals, but the merchants as well. Each group had its master,⁴ and over all of these masters was a chief who represented the corporations to the king. Thus this chief had an important administrative function in the Sassanian state.⁵

Further evidence for the Sassanian origin of javānmardī is that the javānmardān in the romances swear oaths which have certain traditional elements in them. Three oaths from Samak-e 'Ayyār will be given as examples.

1) Āteshak was pleased and fell at Samak's feet. 'What do you command?' He swore by God the Judge and Creator, by light and fire and the sun, and by the bread and salt of men, and by the advice of javānmardān that he would not be false and would not think treachery and would do that which Samak commanded. That he would be a friend of his [Samak's] friends and an enemy of his enemies.⁶

⁴ "Doyen".

⁵ N. Pigulevskaja, Les Villes de l'état iranien aux époques parthe et sassanide, (Paris, 1963), p. 160.

⁶ Ibid., I, 170. Being a friend of someone's friends and an enemy of his enemies as an attitude appears early in Islam, associated with 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭāleb. W. Watt in his Islamic Philosophy and Theology (Edinburgh, 1962), p. 3, says: "Among the troops under 'Ali's command were some who were deeply attached to him; they are said to have sworn that they would be, 'friends of those whom he had befriended and enemies of those to whom he was hostile.'"

2) Ruh Afzā said, 'I swear by God the Judge, the Nourisher, the Forgive, and by those with pure and righteous souls that I am one with you, and that I shall be a friend of your friends and an enemy of your enemies. I shall never reveal your secrets, and that I will share in your troubles. I will do good and I will not slight the doing of good. I will not quibble over small matters and I will not think evil. If a friend of yours requires something which means my life, I care not and will not think of it, and if I do not help you achieve your aim, then I am not a (manly) woman.'⁷

3) Then Niāl and Samak and Sorkh Vard all swore by God the Judge, and by the light and the fire, and by the cup of real men, and by those whose nature is pure saying that we are companions and friends, and that we will never separate, nor will we be false or treacherous or countenance such, and that we will be friends with our friends and enemies of our enemies, and that we will help one another to gain our ends.⁸

There are pre-Islamic overtones in these oaths, when they swear by the light and the fire, by the sun, and by those whose souls are pure and righteous, and by those whose nature is pure. Precisely what these oaths have descended from is obscure, but possibly they are echoes of pre-Islamic artisan-guild oaths.

This gives strength to Massignon's hypothesis that the initiatory structure of the javānmardi groups, which look to Salmān-e Pāk as their esoteric initiator and to 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭāleb as the exoteric one, was laid at Ctesiphon between 636 and 733 A.D., and that the basis of this

⁷ Ibid., I, 49.

⁸ Ibid., II, 15. For more such oaths, see P. Khānlari, "Ā'in-e 'Ayyāri," Sokhan XIX(1348), pp. 24-25.

structure is pre-Islamic.⁹ There is no proof of a direct line of development however, for Cahen maintains that the Sassanian organizations of youth and young men were more cultural and aristocratic than those organizations which later developed in Islamic times.¹⁰ Thus the guilds or trade corporations of pre-Islamic Iran probably provided a model for the social structure of javānmardi but can not account for certain other aspects of it.

With the coming of the Arabs, the old Arabic ideals of fotovvat were spread throughout the conquered lands. They took root everywhere but particularly so in Khorasan. These ideals blended with indigenous traditions to form local varieties of javānmardi. It is clear from all the evidence that javānmardi is an urban phenomenon, and Cahen's theory that at the basis of it lies the 'aşabiyya of the cities is attractive as far as it goes. He hypothesizes that the urban populations were divided along sectarian, local or personality lines, and that these groupings interfered with traditional sport or para-military group rivalries, the latter of which groups included most of the young men and formed themselves around champions.¹¹

⁹ L. Massignon, "La 'Futuwwa,' ou 'Pacte d'Honneur Artisanal' entre les travailleurs musulmans au Moyen Age," La Nouvelle Clio, IV(1952), pp. 176-77.

¹⁰ C. Cahen, "Mouvements populaires et autonomisme urbain," Arabica, VI(1959), pp. 245-46.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 29.

There is scant evidence to support this theory when applied to Eastern Iran, although it may be more firmly founded for the Arab lands. In any case, the structure of javān-mardi probably had its origins in working class organizations of Sassanian Iran, which tradition was carried on in Islamic times and was joined by other social forces such as the 'aṣabiyya of various groups.

Another factor contributing to the development of fotovvat was the particular structure of the Moslem artisan class. In medieval Islam this class was a grouping of the proletariat with no bourgeoisie as in medieval Europe. What in the Moslem world was parallel, but only distantly, to the Christian bourgeoisie did not arise from certain artisan or manual workers who rose in station and became wealthy. It arose from a semi-ecclesiastical class called shohud which was associated with the courts of the qādis. These were recruited by the qādis on the basis of their decency and chastity and became archivists, assessors and notaries. Unlike the fityān their axis was not "honor" but "justice" ('adālat). They had a tazkiyat, an attestation of their honorable record, and this document excluded from their profession certain professions or trades which could taint the purity of the true believer. Specifically excluded were those occupations which violate the dicta of Koran II:148, II:276 and V:92, for example wine sellers, eaters of pork, usurers and gamblers. Others such as tanners, surgeons, barbers, customs collectors and bath at-

tendants were also excluded. It is possible to hypothesize that as a reaction to this there were formed the worker's organizations under the patronage of Salmān-e Pāk, the Prophet's barber.¹² According to Massignon these latter organizations had an axis of "honor," and an "act of heroism" could tear the artisan away from the forced impurity of his calling by initiating in him a spirit of renouncement.¹³ A logical outcome of this spirit of renouncement would be a relinquishing of one's selfish ends in favor of working toward the good of one's comrades in the group.

The question of forming into groups is a complicated one. The urban nature of the basis of javānmardi facilitated this, although there was nothing in the ancient Arabian ideals of fotovvat which would encourage it. These ideals stressed individual values within a tribal society. The urbanization of the Arabs in the Iranian cultural area and the conflict of their pre-Islamic ideals with pre-Islamic Iranian traditions gave to javānmardi its peculiarly Iranian coloring. It was in Sistan that the 'ayyārs¹⁴ gained their greatest power and even established

¹² The material in this paragraph is taken from Massignon, op. cit., pp. 173-74.

¹³ Ibid., p. 175.

¹⁴ 'Ayyār is a term used in early Islamic times in eastern Iran interchangeably with fityān and ghaziān. Cf. M. F. Köprülü, Les Origines de l'Empire Ottomane (Paris, 1935), pp. 102-103.

a dynasty, the Saffarids. In spite of the fact that they were occasionally reinforced by the peasants, they were fundamentally an urban group.¹⁵ Salmān-e Pāk became the patron of these urban artisan groupings because he had been 1) a Persian who converted to Islam, 2) the Prophet's barber, and 3) accepted into the closest social and family circles of the Prophet. Next to 'Ali he is the most honored patron of the javānmardān and almost all the selselas go back to him. 'Ali was revered on two counts. First, because of his bravery, which gave rise to a tradition, generally considered spurious but nevertheless widespread, lā fatā' illā 'Ali va lā sayfa illā dhu al-faqār, which is variously attributed to the Prophet, to a Companion, to a warrior and to anonymous. Second, 'Ali had early become the hero and protector of the non-Arab Moslems because of the marriage of his son Hoseyn to a Persian woman.

The connections between the Sufis and the javānmardān and their mutual influence began early in the rise of Sufism. Massignon has proved Ibn Khaldun's statement that the esnāds of the fityān antedate those of the Sufis.¹⁶ It was these groups of fityān who gave both their ideals and administrative structure to the Sufi groups then forming. There was mutual influence, but fundamentally the ideals of the two groups were different. The ideals of the javānmardān were not strictly religious, and in the

¹⁵ C. Cahen, op. cit., p. 45.

¹⁶ Op. cit., p. 178.

early days the emphasis was very strongly on bravery and generosity, the good life, bravura and showing off. These were in direct conflict with the Sufi ideals of retirement, asceticism, spirituality, with the ultimate goal being union with God.¹⁷ The old ideals of bravery plus the Moslem ideal of fighting for the faith, jehād, blended to add a militant side to the fityān and may have given rise to the ‘ayyārs/ghāzis as a fighting group, and later the ‘ayyārs as bandits and highwaymen.¹⁸

On the other hand, the Sufis adopted some of the ideals of fotovvat, deepening and enlarging them. These ideals of fotovvat undoubtedly contributed to the development of the Sufi ideals of altruism, self-detachment and love of one's neighbor, and at the same time the Sufis gave a deeper spiritual dimension to the ideals of fotovvat.¹⁹ Finally fotovvat for the Sufis became just a stage (maqām) on the path from the earthly to the divine existence.²⁰

Little is known in specific terms about the initiatory ceremonies or group rites of the javānmardān. Tae-

¹⁷ Cf. F. Taeschner, "Der Anteil des Sufismus an der Formung des Futuwwaideals," Der Islam, XXIV(1937), 43-74.

¹⁸ Taeschner, "Futuwwa," Schweizerisches Archiv für Volkskunde, LII(1956), pp. 131-32.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 128-29.

²⁰ Taeschner, "Der Anteil," Der Islam, XXIV(1937), p. 61.

schner says that the fotovvat groups were comparable to the dervish orders in ritual and special rites (Gebrauch).²¹ Up to the period of the caliph al-Nāṣer (1180-1225) the literature of fotovvat was sparse, but when this caliph took up fotovvat for himself, the literature expanded. This new literature provides us with much more, though not complete, information. On the question of initiation it can not be determined from the literature which elements were the continuations of earlier practices and which were innovations of al-Nāṣer's time. In any case, initiation into a group of fityān seems to have consisted of 1) a period of probation, 2) a ceremony of donning a belt, trousers²² or other clothing, and 3) drinking a cup of salted water. The initiate was introduced by a sponsor to whom he was bound in a father-son relationship.²³ Within the organization there were sometimes two, sometimes three grades: 1) Qowli, or one who has taken an oath, 2) Shorbi, or one who has drunk the ceremonial cup, and 3) Seyfi, or one who has girded on a sword.²⁴ The two-level organiza-

²¹ Taeschner, "Futuwwa-Studien," Islamica, V(1932), pp. 285-86.

²² The trousers seem to have had considerable significance. Compare the special trousers worn today by the members of a Persian Zur Khāna.

²³ EI², art. "Futuwwa."

²⁴ Taeschner, "Futuwwa," Schweizerisches Archiv für Volkskunde, LII(1956), p. 140.

tion seems to have been more common in Anatolia and Iran than in the Arab lands.²⁵

Not all who applied were accepted, and Massignon cites a fourteenth century interdict sent to the Shi'a akhis²⁶ of Anatolia which excluded, in addition to those mentioned above, butchers, hunters and public sinners.²⁷ An early Fotovvat-Nāma published by Sa'id Nafisi lists those who can never have fotovvat and the list runs to twelve categories including all the above mentioned.²⁸ The same document lists actions which will remove fotovvat from an akhi, and includes such things as adultery, harboring vengeance, tale-telling and miserliness.²⁹ Sometimes these excluded professions grouped themselves in rival confederations.³⁰

Starting in the ninth century the organizations of fityān appear under different names in different areas. In Syria and Upper Mesopotamia in the tenth century they went under the name of ahdāṣ. These were found in Damascus, Aleppo, Tyre, Mosul and other cities of this area,³¹

²⁵ Taeschner, "Futuwwa," Schweizerisches Archiv für Volkskunde, LII(1956), p. 140.

²⁶ For akhi, see below.

²⁷ Massignon, op. cit., p. 182.

²⁸ Farhang-e Irān Zamin, X(1341), pp. 235-37.

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 244-47.

³⁰ Massignon, op. cit., p. 184.

³¹ C. Cahen, op. cit., V(1958), pp. 243, 246.

and their function seems to have been that of the shorta, to maintain public order. The difference between the shorta and the aḥdās was that the aḥdās were recruited from men of the city. They were a part of the city population and not professionals as was the case for the members of the shorta.³² Their chief was the ra'is al-balad and was appointed by the governor. They seemed to act like 'ayyārs, because they fought for the city against enemies, helped put out fires, opposed or prevented the appointment of qadis whom they did not favor, and held power during times of political anarchy.³³ On the other hand Cahen does not see the aḥdās as an ideological movement like the fotovvat of Iraq and Iran. They were not based on professions, although they were divided into parties (ḥezb).³⁴

The term akhi was used in Anatolia and Persia and sometimes in Mesopotamia to denote a member of a fotovvat group. This appellation appears before the time of the caliph al-Nāṣer.³⁵ The word, although it seems to be Arabic and was apparently long considered as such, actually appears to be an Eastern Turkish word aqi meaning "generosity," "munificence." The fact that it was thought to be

³² Ibid., p. 245.

³³ Ibid., p. 242.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 248.

³⁵ Taeschner, "Die islamischen Futuwabünde," ZDMG, LXXXVII(1934), p. 42.

Arabic meaning "my brother" probably accounts for its being translated into Persian as "brother" (barādar). By the fifteenth century the word fell out of use and was no longer found.³⁶ In Samak-e ʿAyyār where the ʿayyārs frequently call one another "brother," when the Khorshid Shāh is accepted by the javānmardān, he calls their chief "akhi".

There are occasions in the heroic romances when women disguise themselves and act like ʿayyārs. Although this is a typical kind of adventure for these romances, it seems to be based upon actual fact. Massignon mentions that there was an interest among women in fotovvat and that they were initiated into several orders in the tenth and eleventh centuries.³⁷ There was one such organization, about which nothing more than its name is known, called Bājiān, the Turkish for "sister", "wife" with the Persian plural suffix -ān.³⁸

The last of these fotovvat groups to be mentioned, and the one which seems to be most thoroughly identified with the romances is the ʿayyārs. This name was applied from the ninth to the twelfth century to certain warriors grouped together under the fotovvat in Iraq and Persia.

³⁶ EI², art. "Akhi."

³⁷ *Op. cit.*, pp. 190-91.

³⁸ EI², art. "Akhi," and M. F. Köprülü, Les Origines (Paris, 1935), p. 102.

Sometimes they fought for the faith on the borders of Transoxiana and sometimes they formed an opposition party in the towns. When the local government became weak they terrorized the rich for the benefit of the poor.³⁹ In the Persian texts such as Tārīkh-e Beyhaqi, Zeyn al-Akhhbār and others, the terms fityān, ‘ayyārān, javānmardān, ronud, and awbāsh, are used seemingly interchangeably.⁴⁰ On the basis of scattered information, Taeschner⁴¹ has found that the following seem to have been the principles which held a band of ‘ayyārs together: 1) an initiation accompanied by the donning of garments, especially trousers,⁴² and sometimes including a ritual drink; 2) a ruling ethic of truthfulness and decent sexual behavior; 3) an oath to the group which was upheld under all circumstances; 4) a hostility to all governments and their representatives such as the police; 5) a practice of plundering the rich to support their activities and help the poor.⁴³ They were again an urban group, not rural, and came from the lower orders of society. Their chiefs were notables of their

³⁹ EI², art. "‘Ayyār."

⁴⁰ Cahen, op. cit., VI(1959), p. 49.

⁴¹ "Futuwwa," pp. 133-34.

⁴² The donning of trousers probably goes back to a Central Asian practice rather than an Arabic one.

⁴³ For examples of this kind of activity, see Samak-e ‘Ayyār, I, 90-91.

quarter and were commanders in the case of civil war.⁴⁴
 They were of all religious persuasions,⁴⁵ and they were
 able to exercise considerable political power.⁴⁶

The problem has faced all writers on fotovvat of how to reconcile the apparent conflict between the fotovvat of the theorists described in the fotovvat-nāmas and mystical texts,⁴⁷ and the actual behavior of the ‘ayyārs. Cahen proposes that the writers of the theoretical texts were masters of authentic groups of fityān/‘ayyārs and were writing for the edification of their comrades or for external propaganda.⁴⁸ This sort of writing would naturally favor the "image" of the ‘ayyārs and not touch on their daily activities, which were well-known to all. But what is known about these daily activities, particularly in Iran?

⁴⁴ A good example of this from the romances is in Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 882 ff.

⁴⁵ Cahen, op. cit., VI(1959), p. 47.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 51. "A fortiori en sera-t-il ainsi dans les villes où, en l'absence de vraie force armée ou de police, ou bien s'il s'en trouve dont le caractère est ressenti comme trop étranger par la population locale, les ‘ayyarun peuvent se trouver en fait le seul élément d'action sur lequel a certains moments cette population peut s'appuyer." An example of this kind of political power will be discussed below.

⁴⁷ Farid al-Din ‘Attār, for example, wrote a "Fotovvat-Nāma." See his Divān, ed. S. Nafisi (Teheran, 1339), pp. 92-95.

⁴⁸ Op. cit., VI(1959), pp. 234-35.

The greater part of the historical documents concerning the ‘ayyārs describe their activities in Baghdad during and after the reign of the caliph al-Nāṣer. This caliph personally espoused fotovvat and was initiated into one of its groups. From then on there was an increasing amount of literature produced about fotovvat, but only about that form of it which existed in Baghdad and the Arab lands most closely connected with Iraq.

Javānmardi in the Popular Romances

The information about the ‘ayyārs of Iran is contained mostly in the Ghaznavid and Seljuk historical texts and concerns the activities of the ‘ayyārs as ghāzis on the eastern frontiers. We know that the fotovvat in its real sense was an urban phenomenon, and yet the Persian local histories give us very little information on this subject. The idea of fotovvat was current in Eastern Iran as early as the time of Abu Moslem, thus suggesting a long history.⁴⁹ The one known source of information about the daily life of the ‘ayyārs is the popular romances, and until now they have been unexplored. The few writings on this subject have not attempted to place the information to be gleaned from the romances in its proper historical context, or to analyze it.⁵⁰ In fact the importance of the romances as

⁴⁹ "Fotovvat Nāma'ī az Qarn-e Haftom-e Hejri," ed. S. Nafisi, Farhang-e Irān Zamin, X(1341), p. 225.

⁵⁰ The subject of javānmardi in Samak-e ‘Ayyār has been touched upon in this manner in the following: P. N. Khānlari, "Ā'in-e ‘Ayyāri," Sokhan, XVIII(1348), 1071-77; XIX(1348), pp. 19-26, 113-122, 263-67; M. Maḥjub, "Samak-e ‘Ayyār," Sokhan, XI(1349), 667-677.

sources for the history of fotovvat seems to have escaped notice except in the most general way.

The romances are intimately bound up with fotovvat. They grew out of the same milieu from which were drawn the ‘ayyārs, that is to say, the lower economic and social levels of Persian society. Not only are many of the characters in the romances ‘ayyārs, but the main task of all the romances, be they ‘ayyār tales or not, is to portray the ideals of javānmardi through the actions of principal Persian characters. The romances were, as Mélikoff puts it, the principal means of propagating the ideals of javānmardi among the illiterate population, for whom the epic heroes represented in a simple and accessible manner the chivalric ideal.⁵¹ They were stories told to people by storytellers. They were at the same time products of and purveyors of a living tradition. If seen in this light, their importance for the study of javānmardi can be understood. They by no means solve all the problems, but in the absence of any similar material they must stand as prime sources.

The heroes. The heroes of the romances are generally kings or princes. The exceptions are Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza where Ḥamza stands in the role of a prince, being a close relation of the Prophet's, the commander of an army, a daring and bold hero, and in the long run, on the Persian side. In Samak-e ‘Ayyār the principal character is Samak, but

⁵¹ Abu Muslim (Paris, 1962), p. 27.

since the tradition requires that the hero be a prince, there is Khorshid Shāh, a prince, who stands superior to Samak, and whose actions motivate the story itself and provide an excuse for Samak to operate. Thus there are two heroes in Samak-e 'Ayyār. In any event, the hero in the romances represents the cultural ideals of the javānmardān and the strata of the population from which they arose.

The first characteristic of the Persian heroes is that they are represented as being better in all respects than the foreign heroes. This includes Ḥamza who as a literary character is thoroughly Persianized. The character of Alexander in Eskandar Nāma is a different problem since the basis of the book is foreign. Alexander has become Persianized, but for historical and psychological reasons he has also been made to be ridiculous.⁵² The second characteristic is that the hero is usually exceptional if not perfect in beauty and bravery. His extreme handsomeness results in women falling in love with him at every turn and gives him a chance to display one of his qualities of javānmardi, i.e., strictly proper behavior with the opposite sex even under the most trying circumstances.⁵³ His bravery and skill in battle are never questioned, and he can always be called upon to save the day when military matters have become difficult. He is very generous, often dividing the whole of a captured

⁵² Cf. Eskandar Nāma, pp. 573, 587.

⁵³ See below for examples of this.

treasure among his troops or his people.⁵⁴ One of the common qualities of Persian heroes is their attitude toward the people of a conquered city. Foreign princes are likely to slaughter a population out of innate blood-thirstiness and cruelty, while the Persians will always spare a conquered population unless there is a compelling reason not to do so. In Dārāb Nāma we read, "Stage by stage they [Dārāb and his army marching on Rum] advanced and they passed city after city. Dārāb proclaimed that whosoever from the Persian army shall act unjustly to anyone encountered along the route, he shall be trampled under foot by the elephants, and that whatever may be necessary for them, they must purchase with gold. If the horse of anyone should eat the grass of a man's field, I shall cut the owner of the horse in half. Never shall it be said that during my reign anybody injured or oppressed anybody else. In this manner he led his army in justice and equity."⁵⁵

In Firuz Shāh Nāma, Dārāb has just conquered the city of Meṣr and the storyteller has this to say: "King Dārāb said that we have nothing to do with the property of the people (ra'iyat), for the people have no power in the business of kings . . . again King Dārāb ordered that a

⁵⁴ E.g., Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza, I, 42, where Ḥamza finds a treasure in Solomon's palace and divides it among the townspeople, and Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 378-79, where Firuz Shāh divides a treasure among his nobles.

⁵⁵ Dārāb Nāma, I, 357.

group of officers go to the principal place in the market and proclaim that it is King Dārāb's command that the people of Meṣr be safe and at ease and that nobody will have anything [unjust] to do with them."⁵⁶

As a third example, in Firuz Shāh Nāma we read of a Persian general's conversation with the vizier of the former king of Aleppo. The vizier has delivered the city to the Persians because of the foolish stubbornness of the king. The Persian speaks: "'I have heard what you said and what you did was good. It was the good fortune of you and the people of Aleppo that you did not fight King Dārāb's army. This kingdom is now the possession of King Dārāb, and the goods and treasure which are in the treasury of Naṣr ibn 'Adl [the former king] all belong to King Dārāb. Don't touch the property of the people. Nobody has any claim on the property of the people, for your king and ours, who is King Dārāb, has advised us in this matter, and the people have nothing to do with the affairs of kings. Feel secure from us and our army, for no harm will come to the kingdom of Aleppo' . . . [the Persian general] camped for several days by the gate of Aleppo, and that which he needed he bought with gold."⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 764-65. In Firuz Shāh Nāma, II, 365, Dārāb gives the same order with regard to the people of Kayseri.

⁵⁷ Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 834. This motif is not confined to the romances, but finds ample expression in Shāhnāma. Some passages are (Moscow ed.): III:44:645; IV:34:409 ff.; V:93:129 ff.; V:322:1445-49; VI:394:231.

The same motif appears twice in Firuz Shāh Nāma with an Islamic coloring. In these examples Dārāb orders his army to avoid passing close to Mecca, lest harm should come to the holy city.⁵⁸

With regard to the king's duties and responsibilities, Dārāb in Firuz Shāh Nāma, speaks at length. After outlining the mutual responsibilities of the king and the nobles, and the king and the army, he says this:

And the responsibility of the people toward the king is this, that they should pray for the king and execrate his enemies, and when they are praying to the water they should say a prayer for the king too. And the duty of the king toward the people is this that the king should protect the people from foreign armies and wield his sword for the people. He should go softly in taking tribute and taxes from them, and if in a certain year their income should decline, he should not tax them for that year. He should love his people and relieve them of hardship and oppression, and suppress bad practices current among them. Whenever he does this God most Exalted shall increase his kingdom. It is as if the king had a number of flocks of sheep and had trained several shepherds and then turned the sheep over to those shepherds for them to care for. The wise shepherd is he who respects his obligation to the king and cares well for the king's sheep. He remains awake and alert and protects the king's sheep from thieves and wolves. He finds good fields and running water for their pastures so that the sheep should become fat and increase. The other kind of shepherd is negligent and sleeps night and day. The sheep are hungry and the wolf has access to them. Some die of malnutrition and others are carried off by thieves or wolves. While the king is hunting he comes upon this shepherd and sees the situation. He rewards the shepherd who has made his sheep fat and gives him a robe of honor, and he punishes the other. He takes the sheep away from the latter and gives them to the former. This story says that the people are like the sheep, the king is like the shepherd, and God is like the king. Every king who cares for God's people will reach heaven, and his station in both worlds will be increased. On the other hand every king who oppresses God's slaves will experience a decline in this world and the next, and his name shall

⁵⁸ I, 307, 507.

be cursed until the day of judgement. I, King Dārāb, have never oppressed anybody nor shall I do so . . ."59

Although this is a familiar statement of the mutual obligations of a king and his subjects, it is introduced here as a statement from a book of the people, rather than from the more usual sources in erudite literature. It is important as a statement of what the common man believed the ideal king should be like, and also as an example of the projection of these ideals on to a semi-historical figure of which no direct memory could have existed. The javānmardān hoped that their king would have the same moral and ethical qualities that they tried to bring to their own daily life. Such a statement seems appropriate in a book which is a vehicle by which the ideals of javānmardān were transmitted to the masses of common people.

These examples could be extended but they are sufficient to show the common man's ideal of kingly behavior toward his subjects. The king or prince is seen as an exemplar, a moral and ethical model for his people. If the king is just, everyone prospers.⁶⁰ If he is unjust, trouble and defeat afflict the people and the king is done away with, as were Jamshid, Zāhāk.

The javānmardān. With an idea of how the common man thought about the king, we may proceed to discover what

59 Ibid., II, 197-98.

60 Compare the countless stories of the justice of Anoshirvān, and how the people and the religion prospered under his rule.

the common man thought about people like himself. We will see that there was a single code of behavior for the princes and the javānmardān. The precise role played by the nobility in the development of javānmardi in Iran is obscure. It is known that the caliph al-Nāṣer gave a strong impetus to fotovvat when he became a fatā' himself, but how much effect this caliphal patronage had on the Iranian nobility and the dehqāns is difficult to say. The conception of the idealized king or prince in the romances is a blend of the national tradition and a mythologizing process in which the ideals of a particular milieu are projected upon legendary or semi-historical figures. The evidence gained from the romances must be understood as more directly relevant to the common man than to the upper class.

Evidence for the study of javānmardi in the romances is presented in different ways. On several occasions in the romances the characters speak directly about javānmardi, and these statements can be taken largely at their face value. For example, in Samak-e 'Ayyār, Khorshid Shāh is talking with Shoghāl, the chief of the javānmardān of the city of Chin: "The prince . . . said, 'Pahlavān, how many aspects does javānmardi have?' Shoghāl replied, 'The aspects of javānmardi are beyond limit, but that which is the most has seventy-two aspects. Of these, two have been chosen, namely, generosity (lit. 'bread-giving', nān dādan) and discretion (lit. 'keeping secrets', rāz

pushidan)."⁶¹

In another place Samak and a woman, Ruh Afzā, engage in the following dialogue as she is about to be sworn in as an agent of the javānmardān: "Samak found a chance to speak. He rose and bowed and said, 'Mother [here a term of affection], do you know what javānmardi is and whose profession it is? Ruh Afzā replied, 'javānmardi belongs to the javānmardān and manly is a woman who acts as a javānmard. (Va agar zani javānmardi konad mard ān ast.)' Samak asked, 'What aspect of javānmardi do you have?' Ruh Afzā said, 'I am perfectly able to safeguard something entrusted to me, and if somebody has a problem and needs me, I would lay down my life for him and feel it my responsibility to help him, and if somebody should come to me for protection, as long as I were alive I would never give him up. I never reveal a person's secret to anyone else nor disclose what he has confided. That is what I consider manliness and javānmardi to be'."⁶²

Another instance is when Samak asks Ghur, a hero, if he may have permission to take the field and fight in single combat. Ordinarily it is not part of the 'ayyāri profession to fight in battles.⁶³ Ghur said,

'Samak, haven't I told you several times that you have

⁶¹ I, 44-45.

⁶² Ibid., 48-49.

⁶³ With the exception of 'Omar Omayya in Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza, and this will be discussed below.

no business fighting in battles? It is we who do the fighting and sacrifice ourselves.' Samak-e 'Ayyār answered, 'Pahlavān, you are worthy of being called a man and a javānmard. We think that we too are real men and 'ayyārs, and there is nothing which we can not do. Men of the 'ayyār profession must know 'ayyāri and be javānmardān. They must be expert at prowling about at night. The 'ayyār must be a master of strategems and have many ways of doing things. He must be clever and have a ready answer. He must speak softly and be able to deal with everybody and not be at a loss. He must make the obvious unseen and not mention a person's faults, and hold his tongue and speak little. With all of this he is not unable to fight on the field, and if the occasion should arise he would not fail. If he lacks in none of these qualities I have mentioned, then certainly he may call himself an 'ayyār and move among the javānmardān.⁶⁴

In Samak-e 'Ayyār there is another direct statement of the principles of javānmardi. Samak and Shoghāl have been called before the Faghfur of Chin to answer some questions.

Shoghāl heard the words of Mehrān [an evil vizier] and hung his head and gave no answer. He did not know what answer to give [since anything but the truth would force him to violate his oath of javānmardi, and the truth might cost him his head]. Samak-e 'Ayyār, that clever fellow, was a just man with all the right qualities. When he saw that Shoghāl-e Pīl Zur had lowered his head and was giving no answer, he bowed to the Faghfur and said, 'Long live our sovereign! Know that there is nothing better in this world than telling the truth, and that everybody, noble or common, wise or foolish, should always tell the truth, especially to the king. We in particular, when we speak, we can only speak the truth, for our way is javānmardi and we are javānmardān. Although we are called 'ayyārs by trade, 'ayyāri is nothing more than javānmardi. We javānmardān do a great many things on the basis of this, and toil and devote ourselves to people. My point is that the King of the World knows well that my master, nay, my father, Shoghāl, is ashamed in front of the king and can not speak. I will tell you that Khorshid Shāh ibn Marzbān Shāh came to the house of the javānmardān and required pro-

⁶⁴ Samak-e 'Ayyār, II, 220.

tection of us . . . King, we accepted him as a javānmard and we have done what he wished us to do and have struggled for him to help him gain his end.'⁶⁵

Two seemingly contradictory impressions emerge from these quotations. First, the terms 'ayyār and javānmard, and 'ayyāri and javānmardi seem to be used interchangeably, and second, the 'ayyār seems to be a special kind of javānmard. The solution is that all 'ayyārs were considered javānmardān, but not all javānmardān were 'ayyārs. The terms are used in this fashion throughout the romances.

A last example of devotion to the truth is from Firuz Shāh Nāma. Āshub, a Persian 'ayyār, is caught by the enemy, and knows he will be killed. His thought process is interesting. "They brought Āshub, with fetters on his hands and neck, to the door of King Masruq's palace and held him there. Āshub thought, 'they will surely kill me. Whether I say I am a thief or whether I say I am a Persian 'ayyār, they will kill me in either case. If I say that I am a thief they will both kill me and blacken my name, and they will say that Āshub was afraid for his life and called himself a thief and died in an unmanly manner. The best thing to do, then, is tell the truth. Maybe in that case these people will be afraid of the Persian army and will merely keep me in bonds and not kill me. If they do kill me, at least I will have told the truth."⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Ibid., I, 65.

⁶⁶ I, 909.

There are many opportunities for the Persians to demonstrate their truthfulness to a pledge, since the enemy nobles generally break their pledges with no bad conscience. In Firuz Shāh Nāma I, 447-449, Dārāb keeps to his pledge of a forty-day truce although he suspects the enemy of trickery. In Eskandar Nāma, 141, Alexander holds to his agreement to a five-day truce although during this interval the Egyptian king tries to poison him. In Samak-e 'Ayyār, two heroes are fighting in single combat and the day darkens into evening. Qaṭrān, the enemy hero says, "It is late now, let us go back." Farrokh Ruz replies, "It is up to you. Tomorrow we shall return here." Qaṭrān says, "If you are speaking the truth, give me your hand and we will make a pact to return tomorrow." Farrokh Ruz answers, "A man's word is true. There is no need for a pact."⁶⁷

Initiation. It was mentioned above that in the initiation ceremony, the initiate was introduced by a sponsor and bound to him in a relationship as strict as that of father and son. Some examples will illustrate the importance of this relationship. In one case, Dārāb wants to reward a youth who has been of great assistance to the Persians. "Bring Saghirak . . . They brought him so that he could kiss the foot of Dārāb's throne. King Dārāb treated him very kindly and gave him fine gifts. Behruz, the 'ayyār, accepted him as a son and taught him 'ayyāri

⁶⁷ I, 245.

in private.⁶⁸

Even a prince could be initiated. "Shoghāl-e Pil Zur, when he learned of this said, 'The javānmardi of Far-rokh Ruz is greater than ours.' He embraced the prince and honored him, and the prince accepted him as a father and sprinkled the bag of gold coins over his (i.e., Shoghāl's) head."⁶⁹

Here is an example of a woman initiating a youth and the relationship being called mother-son. "After that Ruh Afzā said, 'Prince, you are my son, and I have taken an oath, and this important matter is now my responsibility. Whatever I say you must do.' The prince said, 'Command. Whatever you say I will set my life on.'"⁷⁰

In the following passage, an actual father and son relationship is shown and described in terms of javānmardi. "Shāh Sayf al-Dowla [an Anatolian king loyal to the Persians] said, 'Listen, Shammās and Shammāt [his sons], you are my servants (bandegān) and you have been nurtured on my blessings. It is incumbent upon you that you be a friend of whomever is my friend, and an enemy of whomever is my enemy.'⁷¹ Several times you have spoken out of turn, and you do not draw your sword on the days when we do battle with the enemy, and you think that you can conceal all

⁶⁸ Firuz Shāh Nāma, II, 310.

⁶⁹ Samak-e 'Ayyār, I, 45.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 50.

⁷¹ This is a frequent requirement of the javānmardān and often a part of their oaths. See above, notes 6-8.

this. Forgetting your obligations to your lord is neither the style of men nor the practice of javānmardān, for whoever neglects this obligation is soon remorseful. He spoke like this at some length, and Shammās and Shammāṭ hung their heads and said nothing."⁷²

The early writers on fotovvat indicate that many of the fotovvat corporations were composed of youths and young men with no families, or who had relinquished family life in favor of a shared existence with a fotovvat group. This evidence is borne out by the story of the early life of Samak-e 'Ayyār. "I was seven years old when my father died. My mother took care of me, but after two years she died and I had nobody to care for me. Whatever I saw, I ate. Then I threw myself into the service of Shoghāl-e Pīl Zur, and he accepted me as a son for I was quite clever."⁷³

It appears that the relationship of the javānmard to his master was seen as an extension of or a substitute for an actual father-son relationship. Thus the organizations of javānmardān were modelled partly on traditional family organization. The all-male groups of javānmardān were able to function effectively because they provided the psychological environment necessary to the youths who had left real family life behind. Some of the relationships of authority and areas of responsibility of the actual family

⁷² Firuz Shāh Nāma, II, 47-48.

⁷³ Samak-e 'Ayyār, I, 245.

were present in the organizations of javānmardān. The initiate had a "father" to whom he was obedient and submissive. This "father" was responsible for passing on to the youth the system of spiritual values and practical techniques of the group. The "father" in turn may have had to respect the authority of the chief of the organization, who would act as final authority in all matters.

In addition, there was the principle of loyalty to the group, similar to the loyalty felt by members of a family to one another. In the real family the loyalties turn inward to the group rather than outward to a higher authority. This pattern of loyalties can be seen in the actions of the historical ‘ayyārs who were traditionally resistant to all external authority, particularly the political. Thus in the groups of javānmardān two unifying principles were operative. The first was a spiritual unity which related the initiate to the individual who was the head of the selsela. This was usually ‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭāleb or Salmān-e Pāk. Here all the "brothers" were united without distinction in a spiritual bond and a higher loyalty to their patron. The second was a practical set of relationships patterned after the traditional family organization. Naturally the analogy to family organization can not be carried too far, since important elements of actual family organization were lacking in the javānmardān groups. The psychological parallels are clear however, and should not

be ignored when examining javānmardi as an important element of the medieval social structure.

Women and javānmardi. This leads to the subject of women and javānmardi. In all the romances with the exception of Samak-e 'Ayyār, the women who leave their private quarters at night to prowl about like an 'ayyār are princesses, accompanied by their maids. No woman from the common people ever does such a thing, so the solution for such women having an urge for adventure or desiring to share in the ideals of the javānmardān was, in fiction and probably in fact, to become a javānmard themselves. We have seen above that the name of one such woman's corporation, the Bājiān, has been recorded. It seems likely, on the basis of this and the evidence in Samak-e 'Ayyār, that women did enter into the life of the javānmardān. What the relationship was between the women's corporation and the men's is not known, and the evidence from Samak-e 'Ayyār must be accepted more as suggestive than as definitive.

Women were respected by the 'ayyārs, but in the end it was a male dominated society and women were kept secluded from the eyes of non-family members. The necessity for a woman to veil herself in a chādor before leaving her house is insisted upon throughout the romances.

Often the 'ayyārs in Samak-e 'Ayyār must enlist the aid of women, be they maids, nursemaids, singing girls or whatever, to help them carry out their plans. At other times it becomes necessary for an 'ayyār to be alone with or ac-

tually pick up and carry a woman bodily. The dangers inherent in being alone with a woman or touching her body were avoided by the device of the 'ayyārs and the women taking an oath in which they accepted each other as brother and sister. This practice appears only in Samak-e 'Ayyār, which text is more directly concerned with the theory of 'ayyāri and javānmardi than the others.

Three examples from Samak-e 'Ayyār will show how this process operated. In one incident Samak must carry Mah Pari to Khorshid Shāh at night. Before picking her up, Samak made her swear an oath. "Samak said, 'Girl, before God do you accept me as a brother?' The girl agreed, and Samak-e 'Ayyār said, 'I accept you as a sister.'"⁷⁴ Later in discussing this incident, Samak says, "With God as a witness we have become brother and sister. In this world and the next she will be my sister."⁷⁵

In another incident Samak has been badly beaten, and has been rescued by a friend and taken to his house. The friend's wife is preparing to treat Samak's wounds. "The woman rose and heated water and brought it to wash the blood off Samak's body. Samak said, 'I accept you as a sister and you accept me as a brother.' Sāmāna accepted him as a brother."⁷⁶

An important virtue of the javānmardān is their re-

⁷⁴ Ibid., I, 76.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 81.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 87-88. For other examples, see II, 153, 154.

straint in sexual matters. They believed in decent behavior and strict chastity before marriage. In the romances the situation often arises where a lover is able to meet his beloved after months of hardship and separation, and yet he will always act with the utmost propriety. The woman is usually pictured as the aggressor and the man the one who exercises restraint. Samak spells it out plainly on one occasion to Āteshak, a youth whom he is helping to be united with his beloved. Āteshak says, "Give me Del Ārām [his beloved]." Samak says, "Brother, know that this is not a game and that everything can not be done quickly. I must wait and see how things are. Del Ārām is yours and she will be with you. You are not better than Khorshid Shāh and your Del Ārām is no better than Mah Pari. Observe how long it has been that they have been betrothed (nāmzād-e yek digar). They have not touched each other, and will not do so until they are properly given to each other. You too must wait. You must not make a mistake and touch her, for it would not be good and in javānmardi it would be very serious (zesht)."⁷⁷

Some examples of this code in practice will indicate how sternly they adhered to it. In Samak-e 'Ayyār we read about Khorshid Shāh and Mah Pari: "The princess was asleep in her room. The prince sat there and kept the code of javānmardi and was satisfied merely to look at her. Although he wanted to do so, he did not kiss the girl's face, for

⁷⁷ Ibid., 235.

this would have been a breach of proper behavior (adab)."⁷⁸

In another instance, Firuz Shāh finds himself in the same palace as his beloved 'Ayn al-Ḥayāt. He steals across the roofs secretly at night to see her in her quarters. " 'Ayn al-Ḥayāt said, 'Prince, how would it be if we spent the night here together, for it is a long time that we have been away from each other.' Firuz Shah replied, 'Princess, my father is waiting for me and furthermore it is not advisable for me to stay any longer in this palace.' Tur-ān Dokht [friend of 'Ayn al-Ḥayāt] said, 'Don't worry about that, for if you were to spend a hundred years in this palace I could hide you so that nobody would be aware.' Then 'Ayn al-Ḥayāt said, 'we must move from here to another place.' They moved their things to a sardāba,⁷⁹ closed the door to the world and sat down to enjoy themselves . . . Firuz Shāh and Behruz were drinking wine and enjoying themselves in that cool room. They passed that day until evening, then that night, and the next day till evening there, and whatever they needed for their pleasure Jānāna [a maid] made ready."⁸⁰

In another case, Bahman-e Zarrin Qabā and his beloved Gol Buy are left alone in a house in Damascus. They swear their love and fidelity to each other and lament the difficulties they faced. After they have pledged themselves

⁷⁸ Ibid., 59.

⁷⁹ A subterranean room used for keeping cool in hot weather.

⁸⁰ Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 581-82.

to each other, "Bahman put his arms around Gol Buy's neck and embraced that harvest of flowers and pressed her to himself and kissed her. He said, 'At this moment they are taking the city of Damascus and your father is being captured by the Persians . . . But you must wait until Firuz Shāh regains ʿAyn al-Ḥayāt who is in Malatiya and marries her. There are several others in the army who, like me, have beloveds, and all of them are dependent upon what Firuz Shāh does . . .'"⁸¹

In the final example from Firuz Shāh Nāma, Moẓaffar Shāh enters the women's quarters secretly and sees his beloved Turān Dokht. Together with her maid they retire to the sardāba and spend a considerable time together.

Turān Dokht said, 'Nurse, we have not slept for several nights and I know that Prince Moẓaffar Shāh is sleepy. Tonight we will sleep.' Jānāna said, 'I have not seen my family for several nights either, so with the princess's permission I will leave . . .' Turān Dokht gave her permission and the maid departed . . . and closed the door to the sardāba. Turān Dokht said, 'Come Prince, for tonight is a night of pleasure and joy.' She threw her arms around Moẓaffar Shāh's neck, drew him to herself and kissed him, and Moẓaffar Shāh hugged her tightly . . . Turān Dokht said, 'Prince, tonight be happy for we are together and there is nobody to trouble us, and the world is indifferent. Who knows what tomorrow will bring . . .' Moẓaffar Shāh understood what Turān Dokht was saying, and said, 'Princess, I am a pious man and until the ʿaqd [marriage contract] is made it is not right for us. Furthermore, I have heard that Firuz Shāh was alone with ʿAyn al-Ḥayāt in Yemen, and they did nothing more than kiss and hug. Your father will give you to me. I am a nephew of Dārāb and you are of no less a station than ʿAyn al-Ḥayāt. We too must wait, and when Firuz Shāh attains his goal, we too shall attain ours.' Turān Dokht said, 'Prince, what are you talking about? When

⁸¹ Ibid., II, 23-24.

will my father ever give me to you, for he is an enemy of you and your army . . . Take advantage of the moment!' Moẓaffar Shāh said, 'Princess, nobody knows the workings of fate. I am from Hirmand and you are from Egypt. How will God ever bring us together? Neither I nor you have any power over what will happen, and if this should be the last time we will be together, what value has one act of intercourse (soḥbat)?' He said this and put his arm around Turān Dokht, and fell asleep. The girl was drunk also; she put her arm around Moẓaffar Shāh and slept."⁸²

These scenes have an unreal quality to them, yet they describe what the norms of behavior under such circumstances should be. They should be interpreted as more suggestive than descriptive or definitive, however what is clear is that in the code of javānmardi at this time in Iran, there were strong rules governing a man's behavior toward a woman, and the javānmardān saw them as applying to the upper class as well as to themselves. The fact that there is one code of behavior which applies to all levels of society is apparent both from Firuz Shāh Nāma and Samak-e 'Ayyār.

Javānmardi and shāṭeri. Before examining the javānmardi of the romances as a political institution we will look at some miscellaneous characteristics of the 'ayyārs. First of all, how did they dress? There are several brief descriptions of the garb of the 'ayyārs and they all agree in general.

1) Behruz-e 'Ayyār had a jacket (nim-tana) of brocade and a colorful silken sash tied around his waist. He had two golden-handled daggers good for digging or decapitat-

⁸² Ibid., I, 571-72.

ing hanging from his sash, and a brocade hat upon his head.⁸³

2) And that young man dressed in felt wearing daggers on his left and right is the chief of the 'ayyārs and they call him Samak-e 'Ayyār.⁸⁴

3) Samak rose and took up his weapons and his knife, his lasso, file, pincers,⁸⁵ forceps, and everything that night prowlers require.⁸⁶

4) Dārāb looked and saw an agile and nimble youth wearing a tunic (qabā) of black felt, with a dagger hanging from his belt.⁸⁷

5) They sent for Shabrang. A swarthy fellow came in wearing a red felt tunic with a hat of red felt on his head. He wore a dagger on either side of his waist and had a lasso hanging down.⁸⁸

6) Helāl the 'Ayyār . . . entered. He was a tricky 'ayyār, wielding a dagger which on a dark night could slice a mole off a Zangi's cheek. He wore a tunic of black felt and had a lasso around his waist and a dagger suspended from either side.⁸⁹

7) Shabrang looked and saw someone coming on foot with a jacket of brocade, a red felt hat and golden chain belt around his waist. He had two daggers for digging and decapitating at his waist, and silk puttees (pātāva) wound around his legs.⁹⁰

8) He looked just like a spy. He had on a black hat and a short black garment.⁹¹

9) Shāh Sarvar . . . looked and saw an 'ayyār who in nimbleness, agility and quickness had no equal. He was

⁸³ Ibid., 685.

⁸⁴ Samak-e 'Ayyār, I, 44.

⁸⁵ قلبتین from the Arabic قلبتین.

⁸⁶ Samak-e 'Ayyār, I, 104.

⁸⁷ Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 193.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 256.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 270.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 395.

⁹¹ Ibid., 659.

of medium height with a tunic of black satin and a black satin hat. He wore a silken sash around his waist with a dagger suspended from either side, and had five small bells around his waist.⁹²

10) Ṭāreq . . . was wearing a brocade jacket and a silken sash around his waist, two digging and decapitating daggers hanging at his side, and twenty-four golden bells hanging in front. He had a golden sword over his shoulder and two golden rings in his ears. He was running in front of Behzād's horse.⁹³

These descriptions suggest that there was a more or less standard garb for the ‘ayyārs consisting of a short jacket or tunic, a special hat and two daggers. Interestingly, the hat, the brocade tunics, the puttees and the five bells also suggest the uniform of a shāṭer.⁹⁴

It is known that the institution of shāṭeri flourished from the Safavid until the end of the Qajar eras. The shāṭers served two functions. First, they were runners, carrying messages, plans and the like for a king or general. Second, they were part of the retinues of wealthy individuals who enjoyed traveling in pomp. The shāṭers would run ahead of and beside their master's horse, providing both a guard and a display of his wealth.

The shāṭers wore a characteristic garb which, accord-

⁹² Ibid., 312.

⁹³ Ibid., 881-82.

⁹⁴ For a discussion of the shāṭers and pictures of them, see K. Kāzemeyni, Naqsh-e Pahlavāni (Teheran, 1343), and Y. Zokā, "Shāṭeri dar Irān," Majalla-e Mardomshenāsi, II(1337), 130-150. Both of these are almost entirely lacking in documentation.

ing to a picture from Chardin, consisted, in part, of a hat, a tunic, a belt or sash with bells attached, and a kind of wrapping or puttee on the lower leg. Zokā says in describing the dress of an 'ayyār from the time of Shāh Šafi, "He tied a belt around his waist which had a number of small bells suspended from it, and which was one of the particular signs of shāṭeri."⁹⁵

There are a number of occasions in the romances, especially in Firuz Shāh Nāma, when the 'ayyārs act in the capacity of shāṭers. For example, they are often used to carry messages to the enemy king or general, and occasionally act as spokesmen. They are noted for their speed and endurance. For example, "One of the Egyptian 'ayyārs was standing there. He was named Bād Raftār the 'Ayyār and he was a speedy traveller, so much so that in twenty-four hours he could go sixty farsangs."⁹⁶ Finally, they sometimes run beside or ahead of the prince's horse. An example from Firuz Shāh Nāma is when Behzād makes his entry into Damascus. "He rode his horse into the city and Ṭāreq the 'Ayyār ran ahead," and a few lines later, "and Ṭāreq the 'Ayyār was running beside his stirrup."⁹⁷ Later we read of a triumphal entrance into Kayseri. "Firuz Shāh was wearing a jacket of brocade, a ruby belt and a jewel-studded crown. He was with Moẓaffar Shāh, shoulder

⁹⁵ Zokā, op. cit., p. 139 and plate I.

⁹⁶ Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 658.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 881.

to shoulder, and from among the Persian ‘ayyārs, Behruz, Āshub, Bād Raftār, Ṭāreq and Shabrang, all of them decked out, were running by the stirrup of the prince. The nobles came on both sides of the prince and the people shouted praise."⁹⁸ In Samak-e ‘Ayyār (I, 183) the qualities of an enemy ‘ayyār are enumerated, and one is that he is shāṭer, "clever".

From their costumes and their running beside the prince, these ‘ayyārs sound very much like shāṭers. It would be safe to say that the beginnings of shāṭeri should be looked for in the last stages of ‘ayyāri.

Special customs of javānmardi. The javānmardān had certain customs some of which are described in Samak-e ‘Ayyār I. For example, they had their own house. On p. 44 we read of Khorshid Shāh: "He took the bag of one thousand gold pieces and went to the house of Shoghāl-e Pil Zur. Two youths were standing there. He said, 'tell the leader of the javānmardān that a stranger has come and would like to enter if he may have permission.' They said, 'the door of the javānmardān is open.' The prince said, 'so it is, but it is against javānmardi to enter the house of the javānmardān without permission.'"⁹⁹ Again on p. 87, Samak and the other ‘ayyārs have been ambushed in the court. They have all been beaten and many have been killed. The evil vizier speaks: "Mehran said, 'Go to the

⁹⁸ Ibid., II, 489.

⁹⁹ Cf. Koran XXIV:26.

house of the javānmardān and plunder it.' A group went to the house of the javānmardān and plundered it . . . and stole everything that was in the house and razed it."

The javānmardān having their own house suggests a parallel with the Sufi khānagāh, and is another piece of evidence for the mutual influence of Sufism and fotovvat.

The javānmardān are not interested in material possessions, and Samak often refers to himself as "owning nothing" (nā-dāsht). They are hospitable to strangers and the best example is that of Javāndust-e Qaṣṣāb in Firuz Shāh Nāma.¹⁰⁰ At one point (II, 13), "Behzād excused himself [asked permission to speak] and spoke of the javānmardi and hospitality to strangers (gharib nevāzi) of Javāndust."

Just as they are reticent about their own affairs, they do not pry into the affairs of others. Samak one time brings some stolen gold to his host and the host asks him where he got it. Samak answers, "You should not ask this, for javānmardān never ask about the affairs of others unless the other person himself brings it up."¹⁰¹

They are a formal group in that they must be initiated into the circle and learn their calling from a master. They are proud of what they can do as skilled masters. For example, Khorshid Shāh and Samak are talking one day. "Khorshid Shāh asked, 'Brother Samak, how did

¹⁰⁰ I, 882 to II, 34.

¹⁰¹ Samak-e 'Ayyār, I, 90.

you tie them up all alone [a group of the enemy]? Do you know some magic?' Samak bowed and said, 'King, curses on all magicians! I know no magic. God showed me the way, and whenever God does not show the way a thousand magicians can not find it.'"¹⁰²

Political power of the javānmardān. It is well known that the fotovvat groups, particularly the aḥdās and 'ayyārs, were political bodies in addition to serving other functions in society. Cahen writes, "Le missionnaire isma'ilien Mu'ayyad al-Din Šīrāzī, qui allait organiser la coalition des forces antiselġukides au secours de Basāsīrī en Mésopotamie, passa à Alep; il note qu'il y a là des hommes appelés aḥdāṭ, qui y sont plus puissants que le possesseur de la ville et la gouvernement plus que le gouverneur'."¹⁰³ This condition existed in the tenth century. There are ample instances in the romances which show the political power of the javānmardān, and how it is often turned against the authorities.

In Firuz Shāh Nāma, Firuz Shāh and Behruz the 'Ayyār are trapped by the night watch in the city of Meṣr. They drive the watchmen back and hide in a dark corner of the bazaar.

The storyteller of this tale relates that there was a youth from the kingdom of Hirmand who had been in Meṣr for a long time. He had become famous so that all the people knew him. That night he was standing in a corner

¹⁰² Ibid., II, 320.

¹⁰³ Op. cit., V(1958), p. 240.

and watching Firuz Shāh fight and struggle and thought to himself 'here is an extremely gallant and brave young man' . . . The crowd returned searching for Firuz Shāh. They could not find him and raised a cry of 'where has this thief gone, for he killed a lot of us and then disappeared.' Abu al-Kheyr the Butcher [the javānmard] had seen where Firuz Shāh was hiding and at once went in the other direction and called out 'Ay . . . that one who did all the fighting went down such and such an alley this way. Go and find him there, for he is badly wounded and can not flee' . . . Behruz said to Firuz Shāh, 'Prince, don't say anything, for a javānmard has appeared and I do not know what trick he worked to call this crowd off of us.'¹⁰⁴

This is a good example of the attitude of the javānmardān toward the authority of the government. The butcher is known to all the people and his word is trusted, yet he is willing to save a stranger from the night watch merely because he admired his bravery.

In the same romance there is an example of how a javānmard leader can rally the populace to act against the king himself. In this incident, Behzād is invited into the hostile city of Damascus. He is accompanied only by his ‘ayyār Tāreq. The king of Damascus, Masruq, plans to kill Behzād once he is in the palace.

The storytellers relate that in the city of Damascus there was a young man who had a claim to javānmardi. He was a famous and well-off man and was a favorite of the youths of Damascus. A great many of the javānmardān of Damascus were loyal to him. He was a butcher and his shop was at the crossroads of Damascus and he was called Javāndust-e Qaṣṣāb. He was seated there. . . when . . . Behzād . . . arrived with many people running along beside him . . . When Javāndust's eyes fell upon the stature and figure of Behzād he jumped up and bowed before him. Behzād saw a ruddy youth, well spoken, with the farr of the javānmardān . . . He honored him and passed on to the palace of Masruq.

¹⁰⁴ Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 585-86.

After Behzād had passed Javāndust the Butcher returned to his house. A group of javānmardān accompanied him and sat down in his house. When they were all seated Javāndust said, 'Javānmardān, know that Masruq has brought this young hero to the city falsely . . . and I have some knowledge of this. This young fellow, because he is gallant and brave has entered Damascus, the city of his enemies, fearlessly and alone with only one footman. My guess is that capturing this young man will be a difficult job . . . We who are the javānmardān of this city, and who claim javānmardi and fotovvat and moravvat, if we put up with this situation, it would be a grave fault in the world of moravvat and fotovvat.'

One of them replied, 'Yes, I know that there are three hundred slaves all well armed, waiting in ambush. When he enters the palace they will surround him and if they are able, they will capture him. If not, they will kill him.'

Javāndust said, 'I am ready to lay my life down for this young stranger. What do you say? They said, 'We are all your servants and are in accord with you in the way of javānmardi.' Javāndust said, 'Since this is the way it is, go into that room and arm yourselves, and we will go together to the palace. We will see what they intend to do with this stranger. If they fall on him, we will rise up and support him so that later they will talk about this good act of ours in meetings of javānmardān. Further, this would not be lost on the Persians. Abu al-Kheyr the Butcher [in Meṣr] did a small good deed and harbored Firuz Shāh for a few days in his house. Firuz Shāh gave him so much money that it is beyond accounting, and he gave the military leadership (sepahsālāri) of Meṣr to him as well. If you lend a hand and we give this javānmard [i.e., Behzād] some help, you will be fighting both for your own honor and also because the Persians will surely capture this kingdom. If they have captured Meṣr, how can Damascus hold out?' They said, 'We are all your slaves to whatever you (akhi) command.'

Then Javāndust opened a room and those javānmardān, forty strong, all went in . . . armed themselves . . . and set out for the palace of Masruq. When the people of the city saw Javāndust armed they thought that he had armed himself at the order of the king.

Javāndust had many friends in the city, and they too joined him. They took up arms and by the time Javāndust reached the door of the palace he had about five hundred men around him.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 882-84.

Behzād is attacked in the court and puts up a spirited fight.

Javāndust the Butcher and the others were waiting there, and when they heard that Behzād . . . was fighting, the butcher said to his companions, 'You guard this footman [i.e., Ṭāreq] so that he will not be killed and I will go inside and bring that young fellow out of this uproar.'¹⁰⁶

He rescues Behzād, and later when Dārāb attacks the city, there is a tremendous battle. Amid the noise and confusion, Javāndust appears.

Javāndust was fighting too, and he called out to the people of Damascus saying, 'People of the city, I am Javāndust the Butcher. I advise you that there is nothing to be gained by fighting the Persians. Stop fighting and join us in order to be safe.' In Damascus the friends and supporters of Javāndust were legion. When they saw him and heard what he said, they all armed themselves and joined him. In less than a moment about a thousand people of the city had joined him and were fighting.¹⁰⁷

The Persians are victorious and in gratitude for the help which Javāndust had given, Dārāb made him military leader of the city. That it was common for the chief of the 'ayyārs or javānmardān to be the sepahsālār of the city is borne out in Samak-e 'Ayyār as well. Shoghāl-e Pil Zur, Samak's mentor, holds that position in the city of Chin, and his arch rival is Kānun, the esfahsālār and chief of the 'ayyārs of Māchin.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 889.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., II, 30-31.

¹⁰⁸ Samak-e 'Ayyār, I, 182.

Two further examples of the political power of the javānmardān will be given, and these will show a different aspect of this power. In Samak-e 'Ayyār we read: "Shoghāl-e Pil Zur came from Khorshid Shāh to the throne of the Faghfur and bowed. He said, 'Conclude the 'aqd between your daughter and Khorshid Shāh, for there is no further excuse not to.' The king said, 'Shoghāl, I will conclude the 'aqd between my daughter and Khorshid Shāh in forty days time.' 'King, that is too long,' Shoghāl said. The king spoke and Shoghāl spoke until they agreed on ten days."¹⁰⁹ Here the chief of the 'ayyārs is powerful enough to bargain with the king over something as important as the engagement of the king's own daughter.

Later the king calls in Shoghāl and Samak to admonish them. "Shoghāl rose and Samak was with him, and with a servant they went to the king's palace. The king was in the women's quarters. Shoghāl and Samak entered and bowed. The king said,

'Tell me, in my whole lifetime as king have I done evil to you or given you trouble so as to prevent you from doing anything? The whole city is under your command. All the imposing of fines and calling to account is at your wish. There is nothing, good or bad, that I have not done at your request. All of this is due to prior service, but I have also done this because you have taken the path of javānmardi and traveled that route. Why are you changing my good name to a bad one? Why do you give a bad name to my family, and carry my daughter away from the palace, as if you were a bunch of thieves? What sort of recompense is this for me . . .?' Samak bowed and replied, 'King,

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 75.

javānmardān do not lie, even at the risk of their heads.
I did this . . ."110

From these examples it can be seen that the 'ayyārs were a positive political force in the cities. Modern writers like Bosworth give the impression strongly that the 'ayyārs were nothing but roving bands of brigands who gave considerable trouble to the Ghaznavids and Seljuks.¹¹¹ Lambton writing in the Cambridge History of Iran states, "The general tendency was for the 'ayyār to degenerate into bands of robbers. Already before the Seljuk times they had been a frequent source of trouble to the Samanid administration in Khurāsān . . . By Seljuk times the 'ayyār were mostly undisciplined mobs who took up arms, robbed and murdered the population, and spread terror among them when opportunity offered."¹¹² This is the conventional view of the 'ayyārs, and is a result of the sources used by these historians. All the historians of the Ghaznavid and Seljuk periods (to say nothing of other periods) were court historians and were bound to reflect unfavorably upon any popular political force which opposed the established one. A typical Seljuk historian's view on the 'ayyārs is that of ibn al-Jowzi (d. 597/1200). He says that the 'ayyārs are called fityān and they say, " 'a fatā

110 Ibid., 81.

111 See C. Bosworth, The Ghaznavids (Edinburgh, 1963), ch. VI.

112 v, 274.

is one who does not commit fornication nor lie, and strives to preserve the honor and reputation of women, and does not violate their privacy.' In spite of this they do not restrain themselves from seizing people's property, not remembering that by their action they oppress the people."¹¹³

Without carrying this interpretation too far, I submit that a good deal of what the medieval historians say about the ‘ayyārs/javānmardān is nothing more than abusive epithets hurled at a popular institution by those whose base of power was unsure and ultimately dependent upon their own military strength. This is the natural reaction of a proprietary or ruling class to a popular political movement which threatens its security. This attitude is reflected, interestingly enough, in Samak-e ‘Ayyār where the courtiers refer to the ‘ayyārs as "a bunch of thieves and rascals."¹¹⁴

These romances were probably set down on paper during the Ghaznavid and Seljuk periods, at the same time that the court historians were writing. It is apparent from reading them that the general population felt quite differently about the ‘ayyārs than did the ruling class. In one incident in Samak-e ‘Ayyār, after Samak has robbed a rich jeweller who is a friend of the evil vizier, people gather at the shop the following morning. "When it be-

¹¹³ Quoted in *ibid.*, 273-74.

¹¹⁴ I, 83.

came light they saw the pit which had been dug under the shop of Sa'id. They shouted out and told Sa'id the news. Sa'id went to his shop and looked over his wares. 'Ten bags of gold are wanting,' he said. He cried out and everybody was talking. One said, 'Who did this? Maybe the 'ayyārs did it.' Another said, 'There are no more 'ayyārs and if there were they would not steal. This was a big theft, and the thief knew how to find the goods.' Another said, 'He did a good thing. Finally they have stolen the gold of someone who has lots more. Thieving should be like this.' Everybody had something to say."¹¹⁵

With all due caution, I believe that modern historians should make use of the literary evidence available in these romances to modify the prevailing view of the 'ayyārs. The point of view presented in the romances may be just as biased as that presented in the works of the historians, but as an expression of popular sentiment it should not be ignored. One need not go as far as the Marxists and speak of the actions of the 'ayyārs as popular uprisings or class war: the truth lies somewhere between. This is what was meant in the beginning of this section when it was stated that the romances could throw new light on the question of fotovvat and add a new perspective to our understanding of it.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 90-91.

Chapter IV

The Didactic Element

One of the qualities which characterizes Iranian literature from its earliest times to the present day is its strong didactic element. This didacticism is present in both religious and secular literature, poetry and prose, both popular and polite. The Iranian feels that literature should be not only beautiful in its expression but also contain a message, high thoughts, or the distillation of a lifetime of study and experience. Literature should impart wisdom to its reader; it should uplift him and teach him a higher truth. This attitude is common today among most older literary men of Iran. It is evident from their critical writings and essays on literature as well as in the kind of material they select for inclusion in anthologies.¹

The Old Persian inscriptions contain early examples of this didactic strain. In Darius' inscription at Behistun we read, "Saith Darius the king: Now let that which has been done by me convince thee; this to the people impart, do not conceal it; if this record thou shalt not

¹ See for example, S. Nafisi, "Dibācha," in his Shāh-kārhā-e Naṣr-e Fārsi-e Mo'āṣer (Teheran, n.d.). Compare also the poetry included in such anthologies as Z. Şafā, Ganj-e Sokhan, 3 vols. (Teheran, 1340) where the didactic element seems to be carefully balanced against such other considerations as descriptions of nature, mystical themes, etc.

conceal, (but) tell it to the people, may Ahuramazda be a friend unto thee, and may family be unto thee in abundance, and may thou live long!"² Again we read in the same inscription, "Saith Darius the king: Thou who shalt be king hereafter, protect thyself vigorously from the Lie; the man who shall be a Lie-follower, him do thou punish well, if thus thou shalt think, 'may my country be secure.'"³

Rypka in speaking of Middle Persian literature makes this general statement: "Many monuments of religious literature contain translations of Avestan texts but a far greater part consists of treatises on morals or dogma, commentaries, polemics, apologies, responses, etc."⁴ (Emphasis his.) In fact the wisdom or "andarz" literature of Middle Persian is voluminous. It consists of anonymous works such as the Dadestān-ī Mainōg-ī Khrad and of collections of andarz attributed to individuals such as Khosrow I and Buzorjmehr.⁵ Boyce, in discussing the fate of this literature says, "In course of time the less religious andarz, with all Zoroastrian elements excised, were incorporated in the Islamic adab literature, and lived on

² DB IV:52-56 (Kent's translation).

³ Ibid., 36-40.

⁴ History of Iranian Literature (Dordrecht, 1968), p. 34.

⁵ "Middle Persian Literature," in Handbuch der Orientalistik, ed. B. Spuler, I, IV,iii, 52.

in a new sophistication and elegance."⁶

Indeed Islamic literature and particularly Persian literature, is rich in this adab literature. Sometimes there seems to have been a direct transmission from the Middle Persian to the Arabic, as in the case of Abu 'Ali b. Moḥammad Meskawaih's al-Ḥekmah al-Khāledah,⁷ or to the Persian as in the case of Ghazali's Naṣiḥat al-Moluk, where Zaehner cites a passage from a Pahlavi text which appears almost unchanged in the Ghazali.⁸ At other times the transmission is indirect, as in the case of a Kherad Nāma in Istanbul described by Minovi. After summarizing its contents, he says, "This list should be enough to make the mouth water of anyone interested in the survival of our pre-Islamic literature and in translations from Pahlavi to Arabic, and from Arabic and Pahlavi into Persian in the first centuries of Islam."⁹ From such sources the Middle Persian tradition spread into the Islamic andarz texts such as Siar al-Moluk, Qābus Nāma, Ādāb al-Harb and other works of erudite and popular prose.

The epic literature of Islamic Persia contains varying amounts of didactic material. Shāhnāma has its share,

⁶ Ibid., p. 53.

⁷ See W. B. Henning, "Eine arabische Version mittelpersischer Weisheitsschriften," ZDMG, CVI(1956), 73-77.

⁸ Zurvan: A Zoroastrian Dilemma (Oxford, 1955), p. 408.

⁹ "Az Khazā'en-e Torkiyya," Rev. de la Fac. des Let. de la Univ. de Teheran, IV(1957), p. 58 ff. This and the preceding two references from Boyce, op. cit., p. 53.

particularly in the part which deals with the Sassanians. The moralizing speech of Ardashir to his nobles, and the long-winded admonitions of Buzorjmehr to Anoshirvān are the best examples. Probably the most didactic of all the epic works is Garshāsp Nāma. Sermons and didactic passages are plentiful and Rypka estimates that no less than a third of the book is taken up with didacticism.¹⁰

Proverbs are an essential part of most popular cultures, and that of Iran is no exception. Much of the Middle Persian andarz literature mentioned above is in the form of proverbs or pithy sayings. An illiterate people, all of whose communication is verbal, will develop a feeling for the spoken word that a highly literate and sophisticated people will not. It is not surprising then that proverbs and neatly turned phrases should be common in the romances, which were told by storytellers to largely illiterate audiences. Proverbs are the principal, but not the only, didactic element in the romances. Many of the proverbs found in the romances have been traced either in the same or slightly variant forms in Dekhoda's Amsāl va Ḥekam. Here follows a list of the proverbs found in the romances with the appropriate page references to Dehkhodā, and their location in the romances.

1) Culture is superior to learning. D 88. Samak-e Ayyār, II, 187. ادب النفس خير من ادب الدرر

¹⁰ Op. cit., p. 165.

2) When justice strikes the eyes are blinded. D 92.
Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 163. اذا جاء القضاء عمى البصر

3) A horse and a woman are fickle. D 169. Firuz
Shāh Nāma, I, 654. اسب و زن وفا ندارند

4) To beat cold iron. D 74. Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 368.
آهن سرد کوفتن

5) It is foolish to strike an awl with one's fist.
 D 353. Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 487.
با دوش مشت زدن طریقه عقل نیست

6) Harm does not come to a seedy (i.e., poor) egg-
 plant. D 355. Samak-e Ayyār, I, 226.
بادنجان تخم را آفت نرسد

7) Do not do evil, for evil will befall thee; do not
 dig a pit, for you will fall into it yourself. D 405.
Eskandar Nāma 36, 291.
بد کن که بد افتی چاه کن که خود افتی

8) You should not step on a snake's tail. Firuz Shāh
Nāma, II, 446.
پای بر دم مار نشایر نهادن

9) Unless you toil you will not gather in the trea-
 sure. D 534. Dārāb Nāma MS 200b.

تا رنج نبری گنج حاصل نشود

10) Haste is the brother of remorse. Samak-e 'Ayyār, II, 262. See no. 24 for the Arabic version of this.

تسجیل کردن برادر پشیمانی است

11) Observe the right place and recognize a man.

Dārāb Nāma 227.

جای می بین و مرد می شناس

12) Add water and the sourness of the vinegar disappears. Samak-e 'Ayyār, II, 334.

چون آب آمد ترشی از سرکه رفت

13) To have something up one's sleeve. Samak-e 'Ay-yār, I, 210.

چیزی در جوال داشتن

14) Justice was done where it belonged. D 697. Dār-āb Nāma MS 200b.

حق بحق رسید

15) Observe the blood on the threshold but do not ask about it. D 763. Firuz Shāh Nāma, II, 546.

خون بر در آستانه می بین و می پرس

16) First find a companion, then take to the road; first find a neighbor, then make a home. D 249. Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 25.

الرفیق نم الطريق والجاره نم الدارة

17) If you give a rustic the opportunity he will clean his penis with the tablecloth. Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza, I, 106.

دوستائی را جای دهی کیر با کندوری پاک کند

18) Do not stir up a beehive. D 921. Samak-e 'Ayyār,
I, 97. زنبدر خانه نشاید آشوبنتن

19) Dead men tell no tales. D 960. Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza 14.
سر بریده بانگ نکند

20) The lion is great because he fights for himself
and does not leave things in the hands of others. Eskan-
dar Nāma 500.

شیر بدان سطر باشد که جنگ خود کند و کار برست دیگران نکند

21) The blow of the tongue is worse than the blow of
the lance. Samak-e 'Ayyār, II, 44.
ضرب اللسان اشد من ضرب السنان

22) The physician needs a physician. Firuz Shāh Nā-
ma, II, 556.

طیب را طیبی باید

23) For the cat to be let out of the bag. D 1069.
Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 562.

طفت از بام افتادن

24) Haste is the brother of remorse. Samak-e 'Ayyār,
II, 262. See also no. 10 for the Persian version of this.

العجلة اخ الندامة

25) Take an omen from what happened. Eskandar Nāma
439.

القال على ما جرا

26) One flees from what one can not bear. D 264.

Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 297.

الفرار مما لا يطاق

27) The grave is the repository of our actions.

Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 7.

القبر صندوق العمل

28) Find the exit before entering. D 1157. Firuz

Shāh Nāma, I, 328.

قدم الخروج قبل ورود

29) One word draws out another. D 268. Samak-e 'Ay-

yār, II, 334.

الكلام يجز التلام

30) "Every soul shall taste of death." Koran III:

182. D 1230. Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 454.

كل نفس ذائقة الموت

31) A mountain can not come to a mountain, but a man

can come to a man. D 1249. Dārāb Nāma 202, 320.

کوه بکوه نرسد آدمی بآدمی رسد

32) To awaken a sleeping snake. D 1385. Dārāb Nāma

305.

حار خفته را بیدار کردن

33) It is better to be dead under a stone than to be

alive in disgrace. Qeṣṣa-e Hamza, I, 193.

مردم بزمیر سنگ اندر به که زنده بزمیر تنگ است

34) He who seeks something and strives hard will find it. D 1744. Firuz Shāh Nāma, II, 374.

من طلب شیء، وَّجَدَّ وَجَدَّ

35) The ant becoming a serpent. D 1755. Dārāb Nāma 25.

مور مار گشتن

36) There is no pleasure without pain and no rose without a thorn. Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza, I, 24.

نوش بی نیش نیست و گل بی خار نیست

37) What is far from the eye is far from the heart. D 1945. Dārāb Nāma 222.

هر چه از چشم دور از دل دور

38) For their actions they will receive what they deserve. Samak-e 'Ayyār, I, 137.

هر چه از کار باز گیرند بکار باید

39) For whatever you do in this world you will be punished in this world. Eskandar Nāma 616.

هر چه در جهان به هر که در جهان

40) The task is clear and it is clear what it takes to do it. D 1933. Samak-e 'Ayyār, I, 233.

هر کار بدید و مرد هر کار بدید

41) For every action there is a reaction. Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 585.

هر کس که چنان کند چنین آید پیش

42) Whoever does what he should not do will receive an appropriate punishment. Dārāb Nāma 211.

هر که آن کند که نباید آن بیند که نساید

43) Whoever does not fear people's tongues does not fear God. Dārāb Nāma 58. Cf. "Vox populi vox Dei."

هر که از زبان خلق نترسد او از خدای نترسد

44) (Variant of no. 42) D 1938. Dārāb Nāma 304.

هر که نا کردنی کند نا دیدنی بیند

45) One well-mannered woman is better than a thousand ill-mannered ones. Dārāb Nāma MS 200b.

یک زن رسوم دان بهتر از هزار بی رسم

Another vehicle for didacticism in the romance is an inscription left by an ancient king and discovered by the hero. There are many ancient inscriptions in the romances but not all are didactic, about half of them being merely informative ("I, Solomon, left this treasure for you, Hamza, to find . . ." or "This spell was cast by Solomon and to break it you must . . ."). The motif of words of wisdom left by a wise king of ancient times for the edification of later generations is widespread in Middle Eastern literature¹¹ and is probably originally Babylonian.

The inscriptions are usually left in remote or difficult-to-reach places, thus implying that only those who have the will and stamina to reach them are worthy of re-

¹¹ For example, in the story of "The City of Brass" in 1001 Nights (Burton translation, VI, 90-95) several inscriptions are found, all warning against being deceived by the vanities of this world.

ceiving the message. Their words were left so that future heroes could find and profit from them, because when the hero has been improved by them, he can then be an example to his people. The spirit of this motif goes deep into the Iranian past and is a manifestation of the Iranian view of kingship and society. The king, to rule legitimately, must be deserving of the farr, the divine glory, and one of the requisite qualities is wisdom. It is fitting that the wisdom of an ancient king be passed on to later kings (or heroes, for the hero is symbolically a king). Finding and reading the inscriptions, and sometimes it is only the hero who can read it, is thus reserved for the few who are destined for greatness.

There is yet a deeper strain to this motif of the hero finding a remote and obscure inscription. This action, the long and dangerous struggle to reach a goal, and there finding a message containing the wisdom of the remote past, wisdom which will enrich the spirit of the hero and make him a better guide for his people, is a metaphor for the mythical cycle of the hero. In this cycle, the hero sets out on a quest after receiving a call from the other world (or his own unconscious) and crossing certain thresholds. He undertakes a long and difficult journey, at the successful conclusion of which he receives a spiritual insight of profound significance and returns with his new and deeper understanding to the world which he had left behind. He now brings his message to mankind, and his mission is fulfilled.

In the romances it is the hero who finds the didactic inscription and often he is the only one who can read it. The inscription is always in a remote place, sometimes in a place where no man has set foot for centuries. The hero is deeply moved by the message which he reads, and often weeps. After reading the inscription and departing in tears, the hero continues on his way, an improved man. The cycle remains incomplete, but its core is present in this motif.

In the romances, Islamic legend has joined pre-Islamic Iranian legend, and now the hero, instead of having the farr, often possesses the knowledge of the ninety-nine names of God. If he is a great hero, he will know the Greatest Name (esm-e a'zam). Knowledge of the Greatest Name gives him almost unlimited power over the forces of evil and the supernatural, and like the farr, is reserved for only the few.

The inscriptions are often associated with a treasure. For example, in Firuz Shāh Nāma, Firuz Shāh discovers a tablet hanging over a throne in a remote part of an almost inaccessible castle. It was left by Tahmuras-e Div-Band, and reads,

Oh you who find this treasure, know that I lived seven hundred years and I conquered the world and I gathered together and laid up great treasures. Now it has fallen to you. Take it and use it generously, and do not ever lament over two particular days: the day which has passed and the one which has not yet come. There is no confidence to be placed in the world and its trappings. The wise man will not set his heart on it,

for the treasures and wealth of the world are not worth the pain which accompany them. Act so as to achieve a good name in the world, for people with a good name live on and those with a bad name die. Altogether I have left great quantities of treasure and jewels; heed this advice for it is worth more than a thousand treasures.

Then follow the nine precepts of Tahmuras:

There are nine people who are considered despicable; the first is the uninvited guest; the second is he who interrupts a conversation; the third is a guest who criticizes his host; the fourth is the one who does not know the road but would guide the king; the fifth is one who does not know his own place; the sixth is one who talks to someone who does not want to listen to him; the seventh is one who desires something from a miser; the eighth is he who tells his needs to his enemy; the ninth is he who resorts to violence against one more wealthy than he.¹²

Firuz Shāh finds another inscription with a similar message and weeps at the wisdom of that ancient king.¹³ Alexander also finds one, but largely by accident. Its message is similar; "I reigned two hundred years and in the end took nothing with me save my winding sheet."¹⁴

The warning to beware of the snares of this world, to reject it in favor of the next, is both the message of Islam and of the late Middle Persian andarz literature. This latter, which has survived in books from the ninth century, is far removed from early Zoroastrianism, in spirit as well as in time. What was once earth-bound has now become unworldly, and the hero-king, ruling with the

¹² Firuz Shāh Nāma, II, 485-87.

¹³ Ibid., I, 820-21.

¹⁴ Eskandar Nāma, 320.

farr, is firmly imbued with what was perfectly familiar to the storyteller's audience. The tradition lives on but the content of the tradition is adapted to the times.

The third means by which the didactic element of the romances is conveyed is through lectures and sermons. There are two forms: one character speaking directly to another, or the storyteller or a character speaking directly to the audience.¹⁵ The messages conveyed by these sermons are more varied than those in the inscriptions, but no less Islamic in character.

In the first category of one character speaking to another, the long sermon by Dārāb to his nobles in Firuz Shāh Nāma is typical. He begins with pious reflections on the unity and omnipotence of God, saying that we are merely his slaves and all benefits are from him. If one desires to be acceptable to God, one must behave properly on earth. To be honored on earth the king must behave honorably and observe his responsibilities to the people, just as the people must carry out their responsibilities to their king. He then lists the king's responsibilities vis-a-vis the nobles, the army, and the people, and vice versa. The sermon ends with a parable and an exhortation to "know thyself."¹⁶

¹⁵ Naturally, since we must read the romances, the storyteller speaks to the reader. These romances are part of the tradition of oral storytelling however, and the spirit of them is to have the storyteller speak to an audience.

¹⁶ Firuz Shāh Nāma, II, 197-99.

Eskandar Nāma is the most didactic of all the romances. A fair portion of the book is taken up with pure storytelling, either by a character, or by the storyteller himself. By pure storytelling is meant the insertion of shorter tales and anecdotes in the larger romance. These tales and anecdotes have nothing to do with the main plot and serve merely to entertain and instruct the listener. It is the same as a garrulous conversationalist who in the course of an account, says, "By the way, that reminds me of a story" and proceeds to tell an anecdote, unrelated to what he had been talking about, for the sheer pleasure of telling a story. This interruption finished, he will return to the point where his original story left off. Since the stories inserted by the narrator in Eskandar Nāma all have a "message" or moral, they are a major didactic element.

As an example of this kind of presentation, the beginning of Aristotle's sermon to Alexander on the death of Darius should be quoted. It has an admirable economy of words and a vividness of expression which are often lacking in this text. Aristotle says, "King, know that whoever was born died, and that whoever will be born will die, for the world is treacherous, tricky, and faithless, and endures for no man. It is a rose garden full of thorns, and its wine brings a headache. There is a serpent behind and a pit in front . . ." ¹⁷

¹⁷ Dārāb Nāma, 463-64.

The second category of sermon, where the storyteller speaks directly to the listener, occurs frequently in the romances. Occasionally these statements are of an informative nature where the storyteller shows off his knowledge on a particular subject. An example is Dārāb Nāma 95, where there is an excursus on islands. The excursus begins "Andar 'ajā'eb al-jazā'er" (On the Marvels of Islands) and it is not clear whether this is a statement from a book called 'Ajā'eb al-Jazā'er, or whether it is the storyteller's own words. In it he tells of an enormous fish called vāl, so large that it does not move. It remains motionless in one place and makes an island of its back. He concludes by saying that all the Greek islands are on the backs of fish.

Another example is Eskandar Nāma 619, where the narrator invents an anecdote which has scant bearing on what has just come before and nothing to do with what comes after it. The anecdote has a message, however. On p. 756-57 of the same text, the narrator tells two short anecdotes to illustrate a dictum which he has just laid down.

Aside from these, whenever the narrator addresses the listener directly he does so with a moral or religious intent. In Firuz Shāh Nāma, II, 200, the narrator moralizes about the folly of setting one's heart on this world, for with every smile come a thousand tears. He takes up the same theme again, on p. 448, saying that the

world never gives to anyone that which he desires, and if one should draw near to the object of one's wishes, it will be snatched away before it can be enjoyed. The transitory quality of the world and the inexorable will of God are the most common themes for all such meditations.

A different note is struck in Dārāb Nāma 403 where the narrator tells us that we should always believe what dream interpreters tell us, for their knowledge is given to them by God and therefore must be accurate.

On the ethical plane, the narrator of Dārāb Nāma uses the occasion of Dārāb's being forced to perform manual labor in a caravanserai as an opportunity to tell us several things which all kings should know.

There are a number of things which kings should learn. One is digging with a shovel and earning his bread, so that he will not lightly take the bread from the hands of others; another is for him to suffer the pains of torture (°oqābeyn) so that he will not without good reason order anybody tortured; another is that he should experience hunger so that he will give to the hungry; and another is that he should know the toil of traveling on foot so that he will no longer make people go on foot to where he goes; and another is that he should experience the wretchedness of being far from home so that he will aid those in the same plight . . . and finally he should struggle so that he will know the extent of power."¹⁸

From these examples it can be seen that the didactic element is strong in these romances. It is presented in a variety of ways and takes for its subject matter a broad range of subjects, religious and secular. It might be noted that this tradition in storytelling still exists

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 290.

today. The naqqāls of Teheran frequently give their own interpretations of the stories they tell, emphasizing the moral points. Occasionally they will pause in their narration and tell a story which will reinforce the moral of a passage they have just quoted or an event just described.

Chapter V

The Influence of Shāhnāma

The influence of Shāhnāma is seen frequently in the romances. This is not surprising since for Islamic Iran Shāhnāma stands at the pinnacle of epic and heroic literature, and all of the subsequent secondary epics look up to it. Shāhnāma is the touchstone against which all of this literature is measured. It is both the formal and spiritual model for a large body of heroic and romantic verse, and at the same time, it is a model for the popular romances. The influence of Shāhnāma is not as evident in the romances as it is in Borzu Nāma or Bahman Nāma, but it is there nevertheless. It is present in the romances in two forms, direct and indirect. It is possible that Shāhnāma is not the ultimate source of influence but is itself a derivative, but for our purposes here we will accept it as the ultimate tangible model. Certain epic cycles such as the story of Garshāsp have by-passed Shāhnāma and made themselves felt to a lesser degree in the romances.

Of the romances, Samak-e 'Ayyār shows the least and Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza the greatest direct influence of Shāhnāma. Samak-e 'Ayyār is also the oldest of the romances and may antedate Shāhnāma. On the other hand Ṣafā states that Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza was written originally at the order of

Ḥamza ibn ‘Abdallāh Khāreji who died in 213/828-29,¹ so its basic story is clearly earlier than Shāhnāma.

On the direct level the influence of Shāhnāma on the romances can be seen two ways. First, incidents in a more or less intact form are transferred from Shāhnāma to the romances. Second, verses of Shāhnāma are interpolated into the texts of the romances. Some of the incidents from Shāhnāma which appear in the romances are given here.

1) In Eskandar Nāma 157-162, an old storyteller tells Alexander the story of Ardashir and the daughter of Ardashir, and the birth of Shāpur. The story agrees with the Shāhnāma account in close detail except that a king of Yemen is substituted for Ardashir and the daughter of Ardashir has become the daughter of a conquered Arab chieftain. At the end the storyteller identifies it as from Shāhnāma and says that they attribute it to Ardashir and the daughter of Tāyer, the Arab king.

2) In Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza 230-231, Ḥamza has been drugged by a div, rolled up in a camel skin and exposed on a mountain. The simorgh picks him up and takes him to her nest where she leaves him for the young simorghs to eat. She returns later, learns who Ḥamza is and apologizes. At his request, she takes him back to where she found him. There he is able to reclaim his arms and kill the div. Later (p. 238) Ḥamza and his companions are at sea in a ship when the simorgh attacks them. Ḥamza kills the si-

¹ Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza, I, p. 3 of Introduction.

morgh and keeps one of its feathers.

This is a corrupted version of the Shāhnāma story of Zāl and the simorgh. The only reason for the storyteller to make the simorgh into so vicious a bird seems to be to give Ḥamza an excuse to kill it. It appears that he must kill the traditionally helpful bird because Ḥamza is an Islamic hero, despite the anachronism of the setting, and the simorgh is part of a pre-Islamic Iranian system of belief. One of the duties of an Islamic hero is to defeat anything pagan or magical which has not been incorporated into Islam, and it is apparently this that motivates the storyteller to have Ḥamza kill the simorgh. The legend lives on however, for Ḥamza takes a feather and ties it carefully into his waistband. The Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza story has an ironic twist to it. In Shāhnāma the simorgh is the one who instructs Rostam in the preparation of the magic arrow which he uses to slay Esfandyār,² while in Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza, Ḥamza kills the simorgh with an arrow. The question remains why such an incident was included in the story at all.

We have seen this same compulsion on the part of an Islamic hero to root out magic and paganism in the case of the Persianized Alexander of Dārāb Nāma. When he is

² With regard to this story, it is possible that in it is reflected a much older, pre-Zoroastrian level of belief. Here the simorgh is associated with a non-Zoroastrian religion, for he helps the non-Zoroastrian Rostam to kill Esfandyār, a Zoroastrian hero.

acting as an Islamic hero he kills wizards, dragons, divs and all sorts of anti-Islamic creatures.

3) There are two scenes in Firuz Shāh Nāma (I, 317-18; 436-37) which depict an enemy army arriving, and which are reminiscent of the scene in Shāhnāma where Sohrāb and Zhenda Razm observe the Persian army arriving. In Firuz Shāh Nāma, just as in Shāhnāma, the banners of the heroes are mentioned.

In two scenes from Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza (190-91; 278), the similarity to Shāhnāma is even greater. Here Bakhtak is present in both and is anxiously questioned, first by Zubin, then by Bahman, as to which of the arriving heroes is Ḥamza. It is very much like Sohrāb trying to identify Rostam among the Persian heroes.

4) The adventure of Rostam and Akvān-e Div has two echoes in the romances. In this adventure, Rostam pursues a div and then becoming tired, lies down to sleep. The div picks up Rostam, carrying him high in the air. When they have reached the sky the div gives Rostam the choice of being cast down on the land or the sea. Knowing that the div will do the opposite of what he tells him, Rostam chooses to be thrown onto the mountain. The div throws him into the sea and he escapes safely. Later he kills the div.

In Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza 235, Ḥamza is borne aloft by a div and given the choice of being thrown down on land or sea. Ḥamza knows that divs always do the opposite of what they

are expected to do, so he too chooses to be thrown onto the land. The div throws him toward the sea, and angels bring him safely to land.

The second incident occurs in Firuz Shāh Nāma, II, 704-706, where Behzād goes to sleep in a tree and the son of Akvān-e Div, Şandalus, uproots the tree with Behzād in it and casts it into the sea from high in the air. Divine intervention saves Behzād from drowning.

Christensen has observed that the Akvān-e Div episode belongs to the most recent level of the national legend. In the legendary history, this episode is attributed to Vishtāsp in the Jāmāsp Nāmag, as well as to Rostam in Shāhnāma.³ Jāmāsp Nāmag is a late Pahlavi text.⁴

In Shāhnāma, this adventure immediately precedes the story of Bizhan and Manizha, and both stories are inserted in the middle of the account of Key Khosrow. They break the continuity of the larger story without advancing it. In addition the Akvān-e Div story is relatively short, having more the character of an anecdote or a folk tale. It may be these very qualities which made it an adventure easily attributable to other heroes, and which brought it into the romances. It is also possible, since it appears in Qeşsa-e Hamza which originally antedates Shāhnāma, that the story entered Shāhnāma from popular or folk sources,

³ A. Christensen, Les Kayanides (Copenhagen, 1931), pp. 140-141.

⁴ Ibid., p. 96.

having been attributed to Rostam at some time before Ferdowsi.

5) In Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza 37-38 there is a scene where 'Omar Omayya brings a series of horses for Ḥamza to try, and Ḥamza breaks the back of each of them. This is very similar to the scene in Shāhnāma where Sohrāb tries a number of horses with the same result.

6) We have seen three occasions when Ḥamza is associated with the enemy leaders--watching Ḥamza's army arrive and trying to identify Ḥamza, the simorgh incident, and the Akvān-e Div-like incident. There is another place in Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza (271) where Ḥamza is associated with Rostam. This time Ḥamza and his son fight, and Ḥamza fears that his son might overpower him. He prays to God for help. The help is granted and Ḥamza defeats his son, but does not kill him as Rostam does Sohrāb. It would be out of character for such a conflict in the romances to end in death.

From these four examples one could imagine that Ḥamza was deliberately modelled after Rostam. This is only superficially true, for in essence Ḥamza is an entirely different kind of man in an entirely different situation. Ḥamza is a hero, but the story of Ḥamza is not a heroic or epic story, but rather a romance. It is to Persianize Ḥamza that he is made to go through some of the same motions as Rostam, but the resemblance ends there.

7) The motif of the hero disguising himself as a mer-

chant in order to enter a castle and capture it, appears three times in Shāhnāma. In the story of Bizhan and Manizha, Rostam disguises himself as a merchant and enters the town of Khotan, where he gains contact with Manizha. The motif appears again when Esfandyār enters the Ru'in Dezh in disguise and captures it. Finally, Ardashir disguises himself as a merchant to enter the fortress of Haftvād and kill the worm. He even says that he is planning a scheme like that of his relation Esfandyār.

This motif appears twice in the romances. In Dārāb Nāma MS fol. 338b, Plato and Alexander disguise themselves as salt merchants in order to capture a fortress. In Firuz Shāh Nāma, II, 427 ff., Behruz disguised as a merchant leads five thousand men into Istanbul to capture it.

The hero disguised as a merchant is a recurrent theme in Shāhnāma and the secondary epics as well as in the romances, but it is the widespread recurrence of this theme which is of interest. The nature of the theme itself suggests an Islamic origin. The merchant was an important figure in middle class Islamic society. In the Baghdad and Egyptian stories of 1001 Nights a merchant is often the main character. Trade was widespread within the Islamic lands long before the Mongol invasions opened the trade routes to deeper Central Asia and China. The merchant and his caravan were seen and welcomed everywhere. It was perfectly reasonable for a merchant to be admitted to a fortress, for he was neutral. Commerce was

his business, not politics. Thus it is that as a last resort, the hero disguises himself as a merchant in order to capture the otherwise impregnable fortress. The motif is congenial to the spirit of Islam and no doubt seemed perfectly acceptable to the storyteller's audience.

8) In Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 93, Firuz Shāh's horse wakes him up in a time of danger, recalling Raksh awakening Rostam at a similar moment.

9) Verses from Shāhnāma are frequently quoted in Firuz Shāh Nāma. This romance has more verse in it than any of the others and a broad range of the classical poets are represented. For example, Ferdowsi is quoted in Vol. I, pp. 80, 255, 263, 279 and in numerous other places. Ferdowsi is a particularly good poet to quote in Firuz Shāh Nāma for two reasons. First, there is a great deal of fighting in this romance and an appropriate line from Shāhnāma fits in easily. Second, there is a quantity of verse present which may represent an earlier, poetic version of the romance, and the meter is very close to that of Shāhnāma.⁵

There is an indirect influence of Shāhnāma in the romances too. It might better be said that there is an influence working through Shāhnāma from the older national and popular tradition. In this respect Shāhnāma is the means by which certain general patterns of storytelling are transmitted, and along with these, certain attitudes

⁵ For more on the use of verse, see below.

and beliefs.

For example, battle scenes are the stock in trade of the epic poet and in this case, the romantic storyteller. There are strong resemblances between the way in which a battle is presented in Shāhnāma and how it is presented in the romances. There is a pattern which is followed in both cases, although it is worked out in much greater detail in the romances. In the pattern of a battle, single combat usually comes first. When the challengers ride out to face each other, they always engage in a kind of stereotyped conversation which usually begins with them asking each other's names. Then there is a period of bragging about their own skill, and warning the enemy of the fate which awaits him if he does not turn back and avoid the conflict. Following this is the conflict itself, and if it does not take all day, it generally results in a full-scale battle by both armies. There are numerous variations, but this is the basic pattern.

Another element has come to the romances through Shāhnāma, and that is the idea of the moral and physical superiority of the Iranians. Just as in Shāhnāma, the Iranians in the romances are presented as being more truthful, more just, braver, acting more in good faith and in general being more javānmard than the enemy. The fact that these qualities are possessed by kings and princes in Shāhnāma has helped set the pattern for the romances, where the hero is always a noble. In the ro-

mances the nobles possess these qualities to a greater degree than anyone else, and the hero most of all. The heroes of the romances are more than life-size, just as Rostam was, but lack the human qualities of Rostam.

In spite of the fact that the romances often reflect popular tradition, the influence of the national and popular traditions seems to a large degree to be filtered through Shāhnāma. Except for the case of Alexander, which speaks eloquently for the strength of popular tradition uninfluenced by the "official" channels of transmission, Shāhnāma, by its poetic force, its strong appeal to the national spirit and its sheer magnitude, looms as the ancestor of all the romances.

Chapter VI

Minor Motifs

There is a host of minor motifs in the romances and it is in these motifs that folklore aspects of these texts are evident. As I have said above, all of the folklore aspects of the romances will not be examined because the romances are too extensive for this treatment in the present thesis, and because the problems of Persian folklore are almost entirely unexplored. The purpose in bringing out a small selection of the motifs is two-fold. First, it will provide a better idea of the special character of these romances. They are enormous mosaics of motifs, and in addition they are huge tapestries of interweaving plots and subplots. It is this background fabric which sets off the major plot elements and which helps to give each romance its own flavor.

The second purpose is to show some of the diverse strands which have entered into Persian popular culture, some of which are Iranian and some of which are common to folklore the world over. The romances are not folk tales, but contain types of folk tales and many of the elements of folk tales. Some of these elements will be selected for discussion because of their intrinsic interest and their connection with Iranian culture, and others because they recur frequently and have some importance in the various plots.

One such motif, which is well known in world literature and folklore is that of the exposed child.¹ One immediately thinks of Moses, the Oedipus story, and of Zāl in Shāhnāma. This motif appears in Iranian legends connected with Key Kavādh (Kavi Kavāta), who was a child of unknown origin, found exposed on a river bank.² According to Christensen, this motif was transferred to Dārā in the national tradition, appearing thus in Shāhnāma.³ It appears in Dārāb Nāma where Dārāb's mother Homāy abandons him in a trunk in the Euphrates because she fears that he will grow up and take the crown away from her.⁴ Its other appearance in the romances is also in Dārāb Nāma, where Alexander is exposed by his mother.⁵ It is interesting to note that this motif is associated with Darius and Alexander, who themselves are conceived of as half-brothers.

From the point of view of folklore, there is always a cluster of motifs associated with the motif of the exposed child, such as in Dārāb Nāma where the child is guarded and nourished by wild beasts,⁶ brought up by

¹ S. Thompson, Motif-Index of Folk-Literature, 6 vols. (Bloomington, 1955-58), Motif S301. Henceforth all numbered motifs will be from this source.

² H. W. Bailey, "Iranian Studies IV," BSOAS, VII(1933-35), p. 760 quotes the relevant passage from Gr. Bd. 127. See also A. Christensen, Les Gestes des rois dans les traditions de l'Iran antique (Paris, 1936), p. 30, where he locates the same motif in Denkird VII.

³ Op. cit., p. 39. ⁴ Dārāb Nāma, I, 11-13.

⁵ Ibid., 391. ⁶ Motif S352. Cf. the story of Zāl in Shāhnāma.

shepherds,⁷ rescued from the river by an elderly couple,⁸ and many more.

Another motif with many variations is that of falling in love. This motif is a very common one in the romances and often motivates the action. The heroes all fall in love at least once, and many of the lesser figures such as nobles, warriors and 'ayyārs also have this experience.⁹

The motif of falling in love at a distance, such as after seeing the beloved in a dream, seeing a portrait of her, or hearing her description, is, according to Geissler,¹⁰ common in the literature of societies where contact between the sexes is difficult. The psychological basis for this is not hard to imagine, and falling in love at first sight is another variation. In medieval Persia, a sternly Islamic society, it would be natural to expect such motifs to appear in the popular literature, particularly since they are not uncommon in the polite literature.¹¹

Three examples of love at first sight will be given.¹²

⁷ Motif S351.2.

⁸ Motif N825.1.

⁹ For examples from other literature and discussion, see F. Geissler, Bräutwerbung in der Weltliteratur (Halle, 1955), pp. 21-34.

¹⁰ Op. cit., p. 26.

¹¹ Cf. Zāl and Rudāba, or Sohrāb and Gordāfarid in Shāhnāma.

¹² Motif T15.

First, in Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 63, Gol Nush, the daughter of a provincial king, falls in love with Farrokh Zād at first sight. She has heard about him and his beauty but not until she sees him does she actually fall in love.

A second example is from Samak-e 'Ayyār, I, 14, where Khorshid Shāh falls in love immediately upon seeing a beautiful girl sitting in a tent in the desert. This girl is actually an evil nurse disguised as her mistress Mah Pari.

The third example also comes from Samak-e 'Ayyār, II, 101-102, where a youth Yārakh tells Samak that he has fallen in love with a lady-in-waiting from having seen her once buying cloth in the bazaar.

Falling in love from hearing a description of a beautiful girl¹³ is another variation, and occurs in Dārāb Nāma 383 when Darab falls in love with the daughter of Feylaqus from merely hearing about her. This same motif appears in one of the Persian tales of 1001 Nights where Prince Ardashir falls in love with Hayat al-Nofus after hearing of her beauty.¹⁴

Lovers also meet and fall in love in dreams.¹⁵ The most striking example in the romances is Firuz Shāh's

¹³ Motif T11.1.

¹⁴ The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night, trans. R. F. Burton, 10 vols. (Bernares, 1885; repr. Denver, 1900), VII, 210.

¹⁵ Motifs T11.3, T11.3.1.

dream of 'Ayn al-Ḥayāt.¹⁶ This dream is described at great length and in elaborate language by the storyteller. In it 'Ayn al-Ḥayāt appears to Firuz Shāh twice, giving her name in a cryptic form and an equally obscure clue as to where she may be found. This dream, like Khorshid Shāh's love at first sight in Samak-e 'Ayyār, is what motivates the action of the plot. We find the same motif in Eskandar Nāma 110 where Soheyl, daughter of King Manzar of Yemen, dreams of Alexander and falls in love with him. She acts on the basis of this and makes sure that Alexander does not overlook her.

This motif has a long history in Iranian literature, going back to Achaemenian times. Athenaeus (XIII, 575) quotes Chares of Mytilene in the tenth book of his Histories of Alexander as saying that many have fallen in love with persons whom they have never seen before but whom they have seen in a dream. He then quotes the story of Zariadres and Odatis, who saw each other in a dream and fell in love. This story entered Sassanian literature and was transmitted to Ferdowsi who included it in Shāh-nāma as the story of Zarir.¹⁷

Finally there is the motif of falling in love from seeing a portrait.¹⁸ In Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 45, 'Ayn al-Ḥayāt is shown three portraits of Firuz Shāh in a care-

¹⁶ Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 15 ff.

¹⁷ See M. Boyce, "Zariadres and Zarir," BSOAS, XVII (1955), pp. 463-477.

¹⁸ Motif T11.2.

fully conceived plan to cause her to fall in love with him, and she does so. Again, in Eskandar Nāma, 193, Queen Candace recognizes Alexander from a portrait which she previously had had painted of him, and presumably falls in love, because shortly after meeting him she promises to marry him.

The widespread nature of this motif in Middle Eastern literature may be seen from the fact that it also appears in Syriac, Turkish and Arabic stories. In the Syriac Pseudo-Callisthenes History of Alexander the Great, Roxanne falls in love with a portrait of Alexander.¹⁹ In the Turkish romance Kör Oghlu, a man, and later a girl fall in love with a face in a portrait.²⁰ Not unexpectedly it appears in the 1001 Nights in the story of the "Goldsmith and the Cashmere Singing Girl."²¹

There are motifs which, although they appear in similar form in the folklore of other nations, have a particularly wide distribution in Islamic literature. One of these is the strange creature called devāl-pā. This is a man who sits by a road or a riverside and asks travellers to carry him on their shoulders because his legs are weak or crippled. Once mounted on the shoulders of the unsuspecting traveller, the devāl-pā extends a pair of

¹⁹ Ed. and trans. E.A.W. Budge (Cambridge, 1889).

²⁰ A. Chodsko, Specimens of the Popular Poetry of Persia (London, 1842), majles 3, 4, 8.

²¹ *Op. cit.*, VI, 156.

long strap-like legs, wraps them tightly around his human bearer and forces him to become his slave. The devāl-pā is usually encountered on remote islands, and since a dangerous sea voyage is almost an obligatory part of the romances, meetings with devāl-pās are not uncommon.

In the romances the devāl-pā is met with on at least three occasions,²² and is common in other Persian popular stories. In 1001 Nights, Sindbad the Sailor meets one on his first voyage.²³

The sea voyages of the heroes of the romances were opportunities for the storyteller to show off his knowledge of strange and wonderful lands. Accounts of these wonders must have been popular with the listening public, if we consider the frequency and the length of the heroes' trips. The growth of geographical knowledge in the tenth and eleventh centuries, and the publication of geographical and travel works such as the Ketāb 'Ajā'eb al-Hend²⁴ written ca. 950 A.D.; the Ketāb 'Ajā'eb al-Makhlūqāt,²⁵

²² Qeṣṣa-e Hamza, I, 123; Eskandar Nāma, 95; Dārāb Nāma, MS fol. 385b.

²³ Op. cit., VI, 50-53.

²⁴ Bozorg ibn Shahryār, Ketāb 'Ajā'eb al-Hind, ed. P. A. van der Lith; trans. L. Marcel Devic (Leiden, 1883-86).

²⁵ Zakariyya ibn Moḥammad Qazvini, Ketāb 'Ajā'eb al-Makhlūqāt va Gharā'eb al-Mowjudāt, ed. N. Sabbuḥi (Teheran, n.d.).

and the Nozhat al-Qolub,²⁶ influenced the development of the popular romances. These geographical and travel books were a mixture of fact and fiction, mingling descriptions of actual voyages and places with fantastic tales derived from a wide range of sources. The road-books such as the Masālek va Mamālek of Istakhri and Ibn Kordābeh are more accurate accounts of the areas they cover, and consequently less romantic for the audience of a medieval Persian storyteller. The romances were primarily for entertainment, and the exotic is always more entertaining than what is close at hand and familiar.

Since a great deal of the travel and adventure literature concerns the wonders found on islands, it is easy to understand why islands play such a prominent role in the voyages of the heroes. Every time a hero sets sail, he is sure to be blown onto at least one strange island before reaching his destination. For example in Firuz Shāh Nāma when Firuz Shāh has conquered Cyprus and sets sail for Alexandria, he is blown hundreds of farsangs off course to an island where he must break a magic spell, and where he finds an ancient inscription and a treasure.²⁷ In Dārāb Nāma, where the longest continuous sea voyage is made, Dārāb calls at eighteen different islands.

²⁶ Ḥamdallāh Mostowfi Qazvini, The Geographical Part of the Nuzhat al-Qolub, ed. and trans. G. LeStrange, 2 vols. (Leiden, 1916-19).

²⁷ I, 815-21.

Islands are not the only exotic wonder encountered by the sailor. The geography books mention dangers at sea such as whirlpools and huge sea monsters, and these too appear in the romances. The enormous fish is a favorite marvel and two are described by Qazvini.²⁸ A similar fish is described in Dārāb Nāma 140. Later in MS fol. 318b, Alexander sights an island which when landed on, sinks and drowns the crew. The story of a fish so large that its back forms an island is widespread in Islamic literature. Cannibals are another risk which the sailor must often run.

A more unusual motif derived from the geographical literature is that of a marooned sailor being rescued by a bird. Dārāb is rescued in this manner in Dārāb Nāma 116, and the bird-rescue is the basis of an incident of some importance in Firuz Shāh Nāma 81 ff. A possible source of this motif is the Ketāb 'Ajā'eb al-Hind by Bozorg ibn Shahryār, a Persian sea captain. On pp. 12-14 he describes how seven people shipwrecked on an island are saved by being carried away by a large bird. A version much closer to that in Firuz Shāh Nāma appears in Qazvini's 'Ajā'eb al-Makhlūqāt, 121-23, where he describes an Isfahani who will sacrifice himself to save a shipload of passengers about to be drawn into a whirlpool. The Isfahani reaches an island and is ultimately saved by a huge white bird to whose legs he clings tightly. This story is

²⁸ Ketāb 'Ajā'eb al-Makhlūqāt, pp. 130, 134.

identical to the story in Firuz Shāh Nāma with the exception that the self-sacrificing passenger is from an undisclosed locality in Pars rather than from Isfahan. The same kind of rescue is effected in the story of Sindbad's first voyage in the 1001 Nights.²⁹

A final example of a motif deriving ultimately from the geographical and travel literature is that of the merfolk. These are people who live in the sea and who look like humans except for their tails. Their language is unintelligible but they have relations with humans. In the Ketāb 'Ajā'eb al-Makhlūqāt (p. 138) Qazvini discusses these people. In Dārāb Nāma 171 ff., there is a lengthy section where a mermaid falls in love with one of the minor characters. The mermaid leaves her husband under the sea and comes to live with the human. They live together four years, have a son and a daughter and finally the mermaid disappears back into the sea. The mer-folk motif can also be found in 1001 Nights, in the story "Abdallah of the Land and Abdallah of the Sea."³⁰

A motif which seems to be especially widely distributed in Persian literature is that of the aging and childless king. Typically, the old king wants an heir to succeed him, and to produce one he marries the daughter of a neighboring king. Generally the new wife conceives on the first night, and the son born of this union grows up

²⁹ Trans. Burton, VI, 16-17.

³⁰ Op. cit., IX, 165-188.

to be a great king or world hero. This is the opening motif of Samak-e 'Ayyār, and Khorshid Shāh is the famous son. Firuz Shāh Nāma also opens on this motif, and Firuz Shāh is the son. The popular story Qahramān Nāma, a recent and much reduced version of Ṭarsusi's romance of the same name, also begins with this motif. The motif figures in Sendbād Nāma,³¹ and is the opening motif of two romances in manuscript in the British Museum.³² Geissler mentions the theme as being oriental.³³ Its spread throughout the Middle East was undoubtedly facilitated by the inclusion in the 1001 Nights of a number of Persian stories beginning with this motif. It appears in at least five such stories.³⁴

Before turning to the final motif in this section, I would like to repeat that this small selection of minor motifs has been brought out to give an idea of the heterogeneous character of these romances. They are composed of material drawn from Iranian and Islamic history and popular lore, and from folklore common to many nations of

³¹ Ed. A. Ātesh (Istanbul, 1948), p. 40.

³² C. Rieu, Supplement to the Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the British Museum (London, 1895), no. 2102 (untitled) and no. 2127 "Qeṣṣa-e Malek Moḥammad."

³³ Op. cit., p. 8.

³⁴ Trans. Burton, II, 283 "Taj al-Muluk and the Princess Dunya;" III, 212 "Tale of Kamar al-Zaman;" VII, 209 "Tale of Ardashir and Hayat al-Nufus;" VII, 265 "Julnar the Sea-Born;" Supplemental Nights, II, 269-304 "Khodadad and his Brothers."

the world. Reference to general works such as Thompson's Motif-Index of Folk-Literature or specialized works like Geissler's Brantwerbung in der Weltliteratur will confirm the international character of many of the common motifs.

The final motif includes everything which can fit into the category of "descriptions of nature." It must be stated at the outset that the natural phenomena which are described in the romances are extremely limited. The same may be said for the epic literature too, i.e., Shāhnāma and the secondary epics which grew out of it. There the range of natural subjects described comprises practically the same subjects which are described in the romances, that is to say sunsets, sunrises and dark nights. In Shāhnāma a spring meadow or garden is sometimes described, and in the romances occasionally a bad storm at sea will be depicted. However the number of storms actually described is only a small fraction of the total number of storms which occur. Beyond this, descriptions of nature which exceed a laconic "dark forest," "cold wind" are totally lacking.

The reason for limiting their descriptions of nature to sunsets and sunrises can not be sought in a deficient descriptive power inherent in Persian writers. The classical poetry contemporary with the romances abounds in lavish descriptions of nature. The extended description of nature is a characteristic of the qaṣidas of the Khorasani school of poets. From the verses found in the ro-

mances it is evident that the storytellers were thoroughly familiar with the court poetry of their time. Neither can the reason be sought in a lack of interesting landscapes to describe, for Persia possesses all of the variations of landscape imaginable in a temperate zone area. There are deserts of different sorts, plains, forested or snow-covered mountains, river valleys, seas north and south and a four-season climate.

Massé observes that Ferdowsi's descriptions of sunset and sunrise belong more to rhetoric than to a description of nature.³⁵ This may be true on one level, but it does not tell the whole story. The reasons for the paucity of descriptions of natural events in the romances, and the emphasis on sunsets and sunrises, must be sought first in Ferdowsi and ultimately in the tradition of Iranian epic literature.

As we have seen above, sunsets and sunrises constitute the major manifestation of nature which are described in Shāhnāma. Only two scholars, Horn and Massé, have made any effort to examine this question, and neither offers an explanation of why it is so. Horn discusses sunrises in particular³⁶ and observes (p. 140) the interesting fact that although sunrises are described repeatedly (and he lists them all), they are never described as

³⁵ Les Epopées persans (Paris, 1935), p. 216.

³⁶ "Die Sonnenaufgänge im Schahname," in Orientalische Studien Theodor Nöldeke . . . gewidmet, 2 vols. (Gieszen, 1906), II, 1039-1054.

red, They are gold, or yellow, while sunsets are only rarely red. Having personally observed both sunrises and sunsets in Iran, I can say positively that the red sunrise is not at all unknown and that red sunsets seem to be the rule rather than the exception. Why then is there a reluctance to describe these natural phenomena as they actually appear?

The answer to this question may help us understand the larger question of why these specific phenomena are singled out over all others of nature for repeated treatment. The most plausible answer is that sunsets and sunrises were not described as they must have been seen because a realistic description was not felt necessary. It was not felt necessary because the sunset or sunrise had a function in epic literature beyond the merely decorative.

Persian epic literature is a literature of action. The emphasis is not on human character development or accidents of fate, but on human action. The characters are generally preparing to fight, actually fighting, or celebrating after a fight. Whatever they are doing, action is the focus of the story. Human action in pre-modern societies was and is determined by the hours of light and darkness during the twenty-four hour day. During the day one works or fights, and at night one sleeps. This is the general pattern. The key points of the day then are the transition periods from light to darkness and again

from darkness to light. The sunset marked the end of the working or marching or fighting day, and the sunrise marked the beginning of a new cycle. Thus sunrise and sunset can be thought of as the points of the day which change the course of events in progress. What has been going on must cease and a new activity must begin. It is in this manner that sunset and sunrise are intimately linked with the action of the epic. They become symbolic moments of transition, times when the action must change its character. These were times which merited the descriptive powers of the poet.

This broadened meaning of sunrise and sunset was carried into the popular romances, which were modeled on the epic literature. The meaning of sunset and sunrise was the same for a villager or bazaar shop-keeper as it was for the hero of a romance. The peasant ended his work at sunset, slept at night and rose again at dawn to begin a new day of toil. The diurnal rhythm of the epic action, just like the diurnal rhythm of the peasant or shop-keeper who listened to the storyteller, was determined by sunset and sunrise.

It is from a literature of action that this convention arose. In the literature of thought and feeling of the court poets, the focus was different and nature could be described at any length and enjoyed for what it was. The court poet was neither fighter nor field hand, nor were those who supported him and listened to his poems.

The stuff of the epic poet was different, and when the epic stories became romances, the focus on action remained and struck a deeper chord in those who listened to them.

In the romances, as in Shāhnāma, there are more sunrises described than sunsets. The language is conventional in all the romances except Dārāb Nāma, where influence of Indian style prose can be observed. In all of these the storyteller drops his simple descriptive style and indulges in fanciful language reminiscent of the polite "artistic" prose. First, five examples of sunsets will be given. Selections 1-3 are in the Persian style, and 4-5 show the influence of the Indian style.

1) Samak remained silent and said nothing until the hour when the vanguard of dark night appeared and the rear-guard of day began to retreat, and the troops of night fell upon the regiments of day and the army of day turned to flee and the stars lifted their veils from their faces and the world became dark.³⁷

2) Then when the life of the day had reached its end and the shining sun passed on (rakht bar bast) and left the affairs of his kingdom to be plundered, dark night seized the kingdom of bright day and sat upon the royal throne and the Turk-faced world took on the appearance of a Zangi, from both armies vanguards went forth.³⁸

3) . . . until the army of night arrived and the troops of day fled, and the tent of night was pitched and the sword of day was sheathed in its scabbard, and the heavenly sun lowered its head into the green sea, and the Jamshid of night raised the banner of the 'Abbāsids. The earth took on darkness and the world became like tar and

³⁷ Samak-e 'Ayyār, I, 250.

³⁸ Ibid., II, 77.

pitch and was hidden from the eyes of its beholders.³⁹

4) And again they drank wine until the sun was about to set. When the sun flung itself into the land of the Zangis, and read out the order for departure and made ready to go, and set its foot into the sea of tar, and the world from east to west became dark . . .⁴⁰

5) . . . until that time when the world became dark and a black servant came from India and breathed charcoal dust into the world and drew up the Hindu tent and brought its hand forth from its black cloak and cut the throat of bright day and beheaded it and threw it into the Indian Ocean and the land of India disappeared . . .⁴¹

It can be seen that the prevailing metaphor is of an army, that of darkness, overcoming another and putting it to flight. This metaphor persists in the description of sunrises but is not dominant. Some examples of sunrises will show how the range of metaphor is broadened. Here selections 1-2 are in the Persian style, and 3-5 are in the Indian style.

1) At the time of dawn when the scent of the morning zepher was wafted about, and the morning, holding up its mirror, lifted the dark veil from the face of the heavens, and opened a quicksilver canopy over the violet cradle of the sky and strewed jonquils over the blue cover, and sifted a white dust over black tresses of the night, and wrote a verse of light with a silver pen on a variegated page, and drew back the black tresses of night from the heart-lighting cheek of day, and raised the white banner of morn over the dark army . . .⁴²

2) . . . until that night changed into bright day, and the scent of the morning breeze blew in the mountains and plains, and the zepher, which is the messenger of the sultan of day, ran with the arrival of the king of the east in this world; the musk-like scent of morning wafted

³⁹ Ibid., 110.

⁴⁰ Dārāb Nāma, I, 196.

⁴¹ Ibid., MS fol. 209b.

⁴² Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 42.

to the world from musk-sac of the gazelle of the heavens, and the calf of the antelope of the firmament grazed in the pasture of the heavens, and the venerable old man of the days purchased this world from the unbeliever of night with the red dinar of the sun, and the nocturnal army of Cetus, with one attack, fled before the lion of the skies . . .⁴³

3) She prayed until the Russian beauty raised her head from the ebony box and arrayed herself like a bride, and set a royal crown upon her head, and washed the Indian mascara from her eyes, and adorned her cheeks with rouge, and placed yavil (?) in her mouth, and donned a ruby necklace, and placed a coral bracelet upon her arm, and lifted the veil from her face and laughed at the world, and the world was beautiful and adorned by her.⁴⁴

4) . . . until that time when the sun raised its head from behind the indigo curtain, and rouged the beauty of the river, and changed her violet tresses for new ones of orange, and opened her eyes and lips and looked at the world, and brought ease to all those who were sorrowing, and rose over the eastern roof, and from the glory of her beauty all the world became bright . . .⁴⁵

5) . . . and at that time when the true dawn came and dark night fled, Milād [a character in the story] arose . . . then day drew its blessed hand from behind the indigo curtain and seized the hair of dark night and slit his throat and drenched him in blood, and beheaded him and threw him behind the mountains, and smeared the blood on his own face and garments and rubbed it around, and drew his sword and waved it about so that its rays filled the space from east to west, and shouted out, and raised his head above the Alborz, and set the crown upon his head and girded on his sword and summoned the small and the great from Hindustan and set them fleeing to the west. Then he took his place and said, 'Milād, arise and greet Alexander, for since I have come the light of the candle no longer dares show itself before me.'⁴⁶

From these examples, where a generally Persian style is contrasted with an Indian style, one can see to what

⁴³ Ibid., 870.

⁴⁴ Dārāb Nāma MS fol. 279b.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 229b.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 211a.

extent the storyteller let his imagination have free reign. In numbers 1-2 of the sunrises, which are from a manuscript copied in Iran and uninfluenced by the Indian style, the metaphors are typically those of classical poetry. Standard items of the poetic vocabulary appear, such as the morning or dawn breeze (nesim-e sahar; bād-e sabā), jonquil (gol-e nasrin), a perfume, and a metaphor for black (ghālia), camphor and a metaphor for white (kāfur), black locks (zolf-e siāh), the cheek (‘ārez), musk-scented (moshk-buy), the navel (nāf), the musk-sac (nāfa), the gazelle (ghazāla), the antelope (āhu), the meadow (marghzār). The feeling inspired in the reader is one of delicacy, lightness, fragrance, grace and gentle shadings of color. The mood and language are familiar to one acquainted with the literary tradition. The storyteller must have had a close familiarity with the stylistic conventions of polite poetry. In addition his own tradition told him that the romances, as far removed as they were from epic poetry, had nevertheless grown out of the epic tradition and did not admit extensive descriptions of nature.

Examples 4-5 of the sunsets and 3-5 of the sunrises are from a manuscript copied in India and probably part of an Indian "family" of Dārāb Nāma manuscripts. Indian influences are noticeable in this text in addition to the vocabulary used to describe nature. Here instead of lightness and delicacy we have images of violence and strong

colors. Throat-cutting and beheading, the colors of charcoal, blood, black Indian mascara, rouge and orange are dominant, and sunrise is an event more elemental, connected with the violent death of the night and its blood which reddens the eastern sky.

Since descriptions of battles are more conventionally presented in the romances, there is less difference between the Persian and the Indian combats. In a description of the arming of a warrior, every piece of his armor is identified accurately, while a sunrise is seen metaphorically or even symbolically and described in extravagant terms. This contrast of descriptive conventions helps give a particular flavor to these texts.

Besides the descriptions of sunrises and sunsets, the only other natural phenomena described at any length are extremely dark nights in Firuz Shāh Nāma, a few storms at sea in Dārāb Nāma and a valley and forest in Samak-e 'Ayyār. This is very little, considering the length of the texts. If one takes into account the length of Shāhnāma, the descriptions of nature in it discussed by Massé are also few.⁴⁷ It must be concluded then that in the tradition of epic literature in Iran, descriptions of nature were almost entirely limited to sunrises and sunsets for symbolic reasons, and that this tradition persisted among the storytellers who told the popular romances to the people.

⁴⁷ "Owṣāf-e Manāzer-e Ṭabī'at dar Shāhnāma," in Hezāra-e Ferdowsi (Teheran, 1322).

Chapter VII

Form, Narrative Elements and Language

The popular romance is composed of certain narrative elements and the aesthetic organization of these elements is the "form" of the romance. The "form" of the romances differs in certain basic respects from that of other Persian prose literature and it is these anomalies which will be discussed below. The use of the term "narrative elements" is suggested by Wellek and Warren's "narrative structures" which however seems less appropriate here.¹

Form

The basic form of the romances is an extended prose narrative. In the works under consideration there is a certain open-endedness to the form; in other words, it is loose and adjustable. The result is that the romances lack internal cohesion and are logically weak. The logical progres-

¹ Theory of Literature, 3rd ed. (New York, 1956), p. 217.

sion and development seen in the modern novel are for the most part absent, and instead there is a loose stringing together of episodes which at times gives the impression of randomness. This anecdotal, episodic quality allowed the Persian storyteller to fix the length of his tale with ease, because he had only to add or subtract narrative elements at will. The narrative elements were largely conventionalized, so their handling presented few difficulties. The tradition dictated how single combats and battles, for example, should be structured, so if one more or less were needed, this requirement could be satisfied with no serious disruption of the flow of the story. The same could be said for descriptions of sunsets, the writing of a letter, the reception of an ambassador or a number of other conventional narrative elements.

This form is ideally suited to the nature and function of this kind of literature. So conventionalized were these stories that McLuhan's dictum that the medium is the message can fairly be applied to them. The message is largely the same in all the romances, so it is the medium, that is, the storyteller who becomes the "message" by his organization of familiar material. Thus it is that the form that the storyteller imposes upon his stock of narrative elements and their disposition throughout any particular plot structure which gives meaning to the whole. It is for this reason that the romances undoubtedly made better listening than reading.

The reasons for this are to be found in the process which produced these romances. The romances were related orally by professional storytellers, men who made their living by entertaining others with exciting and instructive stories. Presumably they knew the basic elements of the story, i.e., the major characters, the setting, the motivation of the tale, and the conclusion. What was used to fill in the spaces and add color and weight to the tale could come from the storyteller himself. It need not be entirely traditional, and indeed, nobody could memorize a tale which in its printed form might run to as much as 3500 pages, as Firuz Shāh Nāma would probably do. Of necessity the storytellers themselves supplied a great deal of the stuffing for these stories.

Undoubtedly the conditions of the storyteller's work had a strongly determining effect on how he fleshed out the bones of his story. If, for example, he were a resident of a populous area and had a regular audience, the tale could go on for almost as long as he wanted it to. The situation of the present day naqqāl can provide an instructive parallel. In Iran today the naqqāls are of two kinds: permanent and itinerant. The itinerant one is called a shamāyeh-gard and is equipped with a large rolled canvas on which is painted a conventional scene, often depicting many of the characters who took part in the tragedy at Karbala. Using this canvas as a prop, he will tell stories and anecdotes, often in verse. He may

stay in a small town for a day or two, then move on and tell the same stories elsewhere.

The resident naqqāl, on the other hand, may be found in the same qahvakhāna (coffee house) for ten or fifteen years. During this time he will have built up a personal following of men who enjoy his stories and his style. His daily income is more or less predictable and in many ways he is a permanent fixture. This permanence of location and audience allow him to tell long stories, some of which will stretch into weeks. The general pattern for this kind of naqqāl is to begin at the beginning of Shāh-nāma and tell the whole story up to the coming of Alexander. He will insert material from secondary epics such as Bahman Nāma, Borzu Nāma or Sām Nāma at appropriate points, and the cycle often takes a year to complete.

With this example before us we may reasonably assume that the medieval storyteller of such tales as Firuz Shāh Nāma was permanently located in one place and probably had a regular audience. It is this condition which made it possible for him to determine the length of his story at will. As we have seen and shall see below, the romances are composed of a simple basic story, the elements of which are tied together and filled out by a number of conventional thematic and formal devices. Most of the individual incidents in the romances do not contribute to the development or advancement of the plot, but are merely filling, inserted according to convention and at the discretion of the storyteller. The narrator begins his sto-

ry in a leisurely manner and continues it in the same way. The story unfolds slowly as the various principals are introduced. The plot development is linear and in one direction, that is to say the storyteller begins at the beginning and ends at the end. There is no plunging into the middle of the story and then developing the plot in both directions. Nor are there flashbacks to supply necessary information. With one exception, all that we need to know about a character is told to us when we meet him, and from then on we merely observe his actions and fill out the picture. The exception is in Samak-e 'Ayyār, which has the most sophisticated structure of all the romances. We are well into the story (I, 202) and have been acquainted with Samak for quite a while when suddenly Samak tells us the story of his childhood and youth. He does this to back up his boast that he can drink large quantities of wine and not get drunk, because when he was young he was fed wine by his mother and he became used to it. This is a case of a flashback in the romances, and it contributes to our understanding of Samak. Earlier in the story we have seen him drink large amounts of wine without getting drunk, and now we know why he can do this.

The plots of the romances are "chase" or "pursuit" plots, and are often motivated by the desire of the hero to be united or reunited with his beloved. This requires him to undertake extended land and sea journeys to distant countries. En route he has numerous adventures and

witnesses strange and marvellous sights. He often catches up with the object of his passion but fate separates them again and the pursuit continues. The romances end happily with the hero having achieved his goal and everybody at peace.

These plots are enriched by subplots, but the subplots are never fully developed. There is no organic relationship between the main plot and the subplots, and the latter seem to be there at the discretion of the storyteller merely to pad out his narrative. The subplots do not fundamentally change anything; they are more like appendages to the main plot which may delay the proceedings at some point but not bring about any change of direction or meaning.

Framed stories are another way in which the development of the story is made to proceed sideways instead of ahead. The framed story is a formal device of Indian origin and familiar from the books Kalila and Dimna and the 1001 Nights. It is not common in Persian prose literature except in works of ultimately Indian origin such as the above mentioned, and Sendbād Nāma, Ṭuṭi Nāma and Bakhtyār Nāma. It appears in two of the romances, Dārāb Nāma and Eskandar Nāma, and is probably the result of the influence of the aforementioned or similar works. The framed story is not fully developed as a formal technique in the romances, but is present in a rudimentary form, not always smoothly integrated with the framing story. It is a de-

vice which does not work well when used only occasionally. An entire work built on this principle has an artistic unity, and the form gives meaning to the content. When used occasionally in a story which is structured in a linear manner it becomes obtrusive. As technique per se it draws attention to itself because it is an incongruous element in the structure.

In spite of its aesthetic faults, we must feel thankful that the framed story does appear in the romances because of the stories which are there framed. The most important occurs in Dārāb Nāma 209-10 where a captive servant girl named 'Azrā tells her life story. She is the famous 'Azrā of the story Vāmeq va 'Azrā, and this is obviously an early version of the tale. Vāmeq va 'Azrā is a Greek tale which made its way into Persian literature and was versified by 'Onṣori. According to Shafi', the version in Dārāb Nāma agrees with 'Onṣori's version, whereas the subsequent retellings of it, mostly Safavid and later, are based on a different version.² The story must have been well known in the eleventh and twelfth centuries because the author of Mojmal al-Tavārikh says that "in the time of Dārā ibn Dārā the story of Vāmeq and 'Azrā took place in Greece, and some say that it was in the time of his father."³ In Dārāb Nāma, the story takes place in

² M. Shafi', "Unṣuri's Wāmiq wa 'Adhrā," in Proceedings of the XXIII International Congress of Orientalists (London, 1954).

³ Ed. M. T. Bahār (Teheran, 1318), p. 93.

the time of Darius II, the "father" referred to in Mojmal al-Tavārikh.

The other framed stories appear in Dārāb Nāma and are of some interest, although they are not as important as the Vāmeq va 'Azrā. There are a large number of stories framed in Eskandar Nāma, and of the most varied kind. There are stories of Solomon and other prophets of the popular Qeşaş al-Anbiyā type, stories of merchants very much like the stories of 1001 Nights, animal fables, stories from Shāhnāma, al-Faraj Ba'd al-Sheddat, Siar al-Moluk, Bakhtyār Nāma, and parts of the stories "Shād-Bahr va 'Ayn al-Ḥayāt" and "Kheng Bot va Sorkh Bot". The reason for the presence of these stories, none of which has anything to do with the plot of Eskandar Nāma, is plain enough: the anonymous storyteller of Eskandar Nāma could not resist telling a good story if he happened to think of it. Its appropriateness or lack of it to the main story did not matter. For example, on p. 129, the storyteller tells us that an old man has told Alexander some tales from Shāhnāma. The storyteller then says the old man told the stories just as Ferdowsi had versified them in Shāhnāma, and that they were familiar to most of the readers and therefore he will not retell them here because here we are concerned with the story of Alexander. If he should tell these other stories, the book became large out of all proportion and the readers would forget the story of Alexander. Immediately after this (pp. 130-31)

he starts to tell the story of St. George the prophet, but cuts it short so as to return more quickly to the story of Alexander. On pp. 198-99, he tells a story from Bakhtyār Nāma, but admits at the end that even though the story of Bakhtyār took place after Alexander, he wanted to tell it anyway, "and God is wiser in these matters." Again on pp. 175-189 two longish merchant stories are told from the book al-Faraj Ba'd al-Sheddat, and the storyteller says that these stories took place in the time of Jesus and that Alexander had been a prophet before Jesus, but they are rare and unusual stories "and God knows better the correctness of this."

There are many other examples of the storyteller's attitude toward inserting anecdotes into his story of Alexander, and they all have the same motive. The story is a good one and he knows that it has nothing to do with Alexander but he will tell it anyway. The frustrating aspect of this for the modern reader is that he mentions "Shād-Bahr va 'Ayn al-Ḥayāt," and "Kheng Bot va Sorkh Bot" several times and gives us fragments of them, but says that the stories are so well known that there is no reason to retell them here.

In Eskandar Nāma then, the framed story has no structural function. It is there strictly for entertainment and instruction, because the storyteller could not refrain from telling it. But the garrulousness of this storyteller tells us something about the informal struc-

ture of all the romances. In Eskandar Nāma the storyteller has let himself go and indulged in the kind of activity that the tellers of the other romances apparently went to some pains to avoid. The romance does not suffer for it however because the basic structural pattern and the tradition of transmission allows for this kind of flexibility. Whereas in Firuz Shāh Nāma or Samak-e 'Ayyār there is just as much padding sewn onto the bare frame of the story, it is of a different order. Samak may engage in any number of escapades of 'ayyāri which do nothing significant to advance the story, but at least they concern him and other familiar characters, and they take place within the time of the main story and in a place which has a reasonable relationship to where the story is set. They are, in other words, more of the same. They give the storyteller a chance to show off his imagination, and a unity exists between the adventure which is there for padding and the main story. They are of the same order. The anecdote is a cog in a larger wheel, a part of a unified whole. It itself has no major function, but contributes to a consistent tone and texture in the story.

The anecdotes in Eskandar Nāma serve no function. They are added to the story in the most unsophisticated ways, sometimes merely by having the storyteller say that this is a good story, not overly long, and well worth telling. The stories are usually moderately interesting and often familiar. In Eskandar Nāma they break

the flow of the main plot. If we consider the main plot to be like a river which flows through the book, the anecdotes and incidents which can be considered as "padding" in Firuz Shāh Nāma or Samak-e 'Ayyār are like small bays which broaden the bed of the river at some point, at the same time slowing down its flow. The stories padded into Eskandar Nāma on the other hand, act like small dams, stopping the flow temporarily. In both cases they are integral only to the tradition of storytelling. In the one case they are used aesthetically, in the other case they are distracting.

Storytelling was a leisurely art. It flourished at a time when the pace of life was slower and the sources of entertainment limited. The example of Eskandar Nāma is probably closer than the other romances to what the stories were like when actually being told to an audience. Storytellers are comfortable with their audience, and everybody has plenty of time. There are no clocks imposing rigid schedules on them. Even today in Teheran, where life is considerably faster than in the provincial cities, the narrators will still stop from time to time to break the continuity of their tale with an observation on the weather, a humorous story which they have just heard and want to pass along, or some moralizing on an incident in the main story. There must have been much more of this in the medieval age, when time passed more slowly. The tradition allowed the storyteller to do whatever he wanted

with his story, and the individual narrators show something of their personalities in the romances which have come down to us.

There is no discernible distribution pattern for either kind of "stuffing". A larger pattern of alternating sections of violent action and relative calm can be seen, and the better the storyteller, the less obvious and unbalanced this appears. Eskandar Nāma is the worst example, with long swings of the pendulum between fighting on the one hand, and a static elaboration of detail, or accounts of Alexander's domestic difficulties on the other. Since battle scenes are largely conventional, they become tedious when they go on too long. Firuz Shāh Nāma has this fault too. Samak-e 'Ayyār on the other hand has a much more complex structure, with rapid changes of scene between single combats, battles, 'ayyārī and static passages of discussion. In this case the story progresses no faster than the others, but there is more variety, color, and movement.

Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza, not as unbalanced and awkward as Eskandar Nāma, is structurally the simplest of all the romances. Ḥamza comes on the scene early and dominates it throughout the story. He is rarely off-stage and the story moves ahead at a more consistent pace. There is one glaring example of padding in Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza however, and this is the story of Ḥamza's involvement with the divs and paris. This is a strangely incongruous section and has all the

characteristics of a foreign body grafted on. At one point in the story Ḥamza is approached by the paris to help deliver them from the divs, who have captured their city. He complies with the request and goes to the land of the paris for eighteen years. After he leaves, Bozorj-mehr predicts that Ḥamza will return in eighteen years to the day, in the city of Tangiers, and this is exactly what happens. The incongruity results from the fact that Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza is a very earthbound book. That is, except for the pari episode there is practically nothing of the marvellous or supernatural present. Since the principle object of the book seems to be to show the superiority of Islamic Persia over pre-Islamic Persia, the small amount of the supernatural which is present is not unusual for these romances, and is mostly part of Islamic legend. The pari episode is full of magic, wonders, and all the supernatural events which are normally met with in the romances, but concentrated into one incident. This incident could be deleted without any serious damage to the story. It is not apparent what structural function it serves. Except for this one incident, Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza has a smooth texture and avoids the unbalance of Eskandar Nāma. Its structure is very simple, so there is not the variety and movement of Samak-e 'Ayyār, where numerous strands are woven harmoniously together.

The structure of Dārāb Nāma has an interesting aspect which none of the others has. Dārāb Nāma consists of two

complete stories, skillfully linked. First there is the story of Dārāb and his son Dārāb (the historical Darius II and III), and second there is the story of Alexander the Great. The stories are put together in such a way that it would be impossible to separate them without doing violence to them. The plots are interwoven and the progression from one story to the other is without effort. Mohl's speculation would seem to have some substance when he says that Ṭarsusi, the creator of Dārāb Nāma, seems to have made a huge collection of Persian tales which was later divided into books bearing the names of the heroes.⁴ There is an introductory section to Dārāb Nāma, running to seven pages, which provides the necessary background for the story. This section is in an obviously different style from the rest of the book and is undoubtedly a later addition. If such an introduction had to be added, it is possible that the text of Dārāb Nāma as we have it was part of a larger text, which when divided, required that transitional passages be added. Such would be the case if the Alexander story were to be separated from the Darius story. There is no way in which they could be separated and still have the Alexander story properly introduced. If it is true that Ṭarsusi made such a large collection and then divided it, the Alexander story appears to be the last, for when it ends, all the strands are tied up and there is nothing left for future development.

⁴ Ferdowsi, Le Livre des rois, trans. J. Mohl, 7 vols. (Paris, 1838), I, lxxiv.

As has been mentioned above, the emphasis in all the romances is on action. There is no attention paid to human development. The hero is born with certain qualities and the story of his life merely recounts how these are worked out. Heroes rarely if ever gain in wisdom or learn from experience. When someone falls in love, it is sudden and forever. There is no gradual development or gradation of passion in the characters. Cowards never act bravely and brave men never falter. An evil vizier is always evil, for that is his function. Characters are conceived of as fulfilling certain functional roles rather than as human beings reacting to events.

Because of the prevailing emphasis on action and the disregard of the inner development of the characters, they are cast in molds and the characterization is superficial. It is the role of the Persian hero to be brave, warlike and proud; of his vizier to be wise and mature; of the Persian 'ayyārs to be loyal and clever; of the enemy prince to be deceitful (although he may regret his actions later and be forgiven by the Persians); of the enemy vizier to be scheming and artful in an evil way; for the enemy 'ay-yārs to be very much like the Persian ones only working for the other side (enemy 'ayyārs often defect to the Persians and become valuable assets).

One of the techniques of characterization common in romances is the simple one of naming. The Persian heroes often have auspicious names such as Firuz Shāh (Victorious

King), Farrokh Zād (Auspiciously Born), Khorshid Shāh (Sun King), Jamshid Shāh, while enemy princes have more neutral names, often Arabic or Turkish. There are, for example, Shāh Valid ibn Khāled of Egypt, Armān Shāh of Māchin, Qizil Malek, Shāh Masruq of Damascus and Shāh Qantarash of 'Omān. 'Ayyārs often have names suggestive of their profession: Shabrang (Night Color), Bād Raftār (Going Like the Wind), Barq Āsā (Lightning Like), Zirak (Clever), Āhu Gir (Antelope Catcher), Tiz Dandān (Sharp Tooth). Princesses are called such things as 'Ayn al-Ḥayāt (Spring of Life), Gol Buy (Flower Scent), Del Ārām (Heart Soother), Mah Pari (Moon Fairy), Āzād Sarv (Noble Cypress), and Nāhid (Anahita). Zangis are called by names suggesting black men, like Qir or Qaṭrān (Tar), or violence, like Qātel (Killer), or Zarb (Blow), or facetious names such as Kāfur (Camphor) or Meymun (Monkey), or real or made-up names meant to sound exotic like Şamandun, Şandal, Land, 'Anbār and Kurang.

In addition to this kind of naming, and the bestowal of epithets such as Now Javān (Young), Pahlavān (Hero), Jahān Pahlavān (World Hero), Hakim (Wise), and Tiz Row (Rapid), the characterization is demonstrated rather than described. The hero is introduced, possibly a genealogy going back to one of the heroes of Shāhnāma is provided, and he is then permitted to function as a hero. He is thrown into combat and defeats numerous enemy challengers, after which he is usually brought together with his beloved.

In the latter event he behaves in accordance with the principles of javānmardi. The motivations of the heroes are all simple: pursuit of the beloved, defense against an enemy attack, or a punitive attack upon a neighbor. Character is never analyzed by the storyteller because psychology is none of his concern. The inner lives of the character are presented only through their action and reactions, never through description or interior monologue.

One personal concern is brought out however, and that is the hero's worry about his reputation. Worry about what future generations will think of him is a powerful secondary motivation. For example in Samak-e 'Ayyār, II, 108, an enemy hero who has defected to Khorshid Shāh's side, explains the disadvantages of remaining loyal to his former master, saying, "Why should I serve in a place where I receive only three thousand dinars a year . . . and in the future they would never read my name in any divān?" In Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 807, Firuz Shāh is faced with the decision of whether to attack a difficult fortress or not. "He bowed his head and thought. After a while he said to himself, 'I am obliged to attack these people, for if I do not those who come after me will say that Firuz Shāh was afraid and for that reason did not attack the fortress. If he had not been afraid he would not have left undone a task for the benefit of God's creatures . . .'" Again, in I, 879, Behzād is telling Mozaffar Shāh his reasons for entering the hostile city of Damascus alone. "If my time

has come, I shall die, and if it has not I have nothing to fear from them. With my club and my sword I will do something that they will always talk about in the world. If I do not go, perhaps they would be correct if they said that we bore witness to our own inability."

The process at work in the characterizations of the romances is generalization. The character is never depicted in individual detail. There is little to distinguish one hero, ‘ayyār or vizier from another. Many details are given, but they do not serve to define a character in the way Captain Ahab is different from all other sea captains or Robert Jordan is different from all other Americans who went to Spain in the 1930's. In fact, the characters are so undifferentiated that they often fail to recognize each other, especially if their faces are covered by the visors of their helmets, or if it is dark and they can only hear a voice. They remain, in Rypka's words, "hyperbolic abstractions"⁵ and not complete individuals in the round.

It is often the rule that if the enemy king is evil, his vizier will have some redeeming qualities, or vice versa.⁶ This device of having balanced pairs of characters prevails throughout the romances. Another example is the

⁵ History of Iranian Literature (Dordrecht, 1968), p. 86.

⁶ Compare the role of Pirān Visa as Afrāsiyāb's vizier in Shāhnāma. Afrāsiyāb is an evil Turanian king while Pirān is a good example of intelligence, fairness and conciliation.

princess and her maid, and is similar to the examples of the prince and his ‘ayyār, and of the king and his vizier. This is far from the model of Shāhnāma where the heroes were well-rounded men, flawed by only the weaknesses which flaw all humans. In the romances the main characters are always incomplete.

The Persians in the romances, or the Persianized characters like Ḥamza and Alexander, be they princes, princesses or kings, are always described as possessing certain ideal characteristics. They are all physically strong, unflinchingly brave, daring, loyal, truthful and handsome. They are compassionate to the conquered and stern with the evil-doer. In short, they possess all the ideal qualities that the traditional epic hero had with one exception--intelligence. They also show a profound lack of common sense. For example, in the pari episode Ḥamza mortally wounds a div with an arrow. The div begs Ḥamza to shoot him with another arrow to put him out of his misery. Ḥamza compassionately does so and the div immediately springs back to life. Ḥamza fells him again, and the div again asks for the coup de grâce. Ḥamza obligingly gives it and the div again springs back to life. Not being able to discern the pattern here, Ḥamza fights the div all morning until noon, always with the same result, and finally someone else has to tell him that if you wound a div and shoot him a second time, he will always come back to

life whole and sound.⁷ Ḥamza is no less intelligent than the rest of the heroes.

To overcome this one great defect the hero needs an alter ego, and it is for the king, a vizier. For the prince it is an ʿayyār and for a princess it is a maid. These secondary individuals round out the character of the heroes. They can not function independently, but without them neither can the hero function. It is logical that these characters have no independence or authority because literarily speaking, they grew out of the model of the epic hero as conceived in earlier days, and are in a sense still a part of this hero. As the literature inspired by the epic drew farther away from the true epic, its structure as well as the conception of the hero changed. The change was probably more rapid on the popular than on the polite level, but it is only in the polite literature that this evolution can be traced. As more elements of magic and the supernatural, more sorcerers and wizards, paris and divs became a part of this literature, the character of the hero changed. With this change came an alteration of the framework of the story.⁸ The hero still fights in single combats, but now he also goes on long overseas voyages to exotic lands. He sees marvels

⁷ In the folklore of divs, this quality is well known. Divs always do the opposite of what they say they will do. Cf. H. Massé, Persian Beliefs and Customs (New Haven, 1954), p. 346.

⁸ For more on this point, see M. Molé, "L'Épopée iranienne après Firdosi," La Nouvelle Clio, V(1953), esp. p. 387.

and is called upon to deal with situations which the epic hero never had to face. Islam begins to have a stronger influence, and the pre-Islamic character of the stories is slowly submerged. The hero has new concerns; he must now fight for the faith; he must convert the unbeliever. At the same time he must represent the Iranian's changed conception of his past.

The importance of the javānmardān in urban Persian society is reflected in the romances. Among the pre-Safavid romances, some were 'ayyār stories and some were not. This is one way of classifying the romances, for Samak-e 'Ayyār and Firuz Shāh Nāma are 'ayyār stories, while Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza, Eskandar Nāma and Dārāb Nāma contain little or no 'ayyāri. In the non-'ayyār romances, the hero is a more integrated person. He depends less upon his alter ego for advice and is more able to act effectively alone. The one is relative to the other though, and in all the romances the hero is still a divided personality.

The change in character of the hero is due partly to the influence of 'ayyāri and partly to the process of idealization and dehumanization which set in. In Garshāsp Nāma, Garshāsp is a super Rostam. Ferdowsi's Rostam was larger than life to be sure, but he still had human failings and could suffer defeat. Garshāsp is never defeated, and his feats of strength and endurance at times outdo those of Rostam. This is the beginning of the decline of

the epic hero in Persian literature.

In the romances the classical epic hero became divided in two. The vizier always stands by, ready to advise the king on policy or strategy, while the ‘ayyār and the maid advise their masters on tactics and the highly specialized techniques which only the ‘ayyār has the cunning to know. The division of labor is strict, for the viziers and ‘ayyārs never hunt or fight in battle, while these are the only physical activities in which the kings and princes ever engage. On the other hand only exceptionally do kings and princes disguise themselves and go about at night, except in the pursuit of their beloveds. The process reaches its logical conclusion in the Safavid retelling of some of these tales. In Romuz-e Ḥamza and Eskandar Nāma-e Haft Jeldi the romances become almost fantasies and the hero becomes further and further removed from anything resembling the old epic hero or even a human being.

Earlier Versions

There is no indication of the existence of earlier versions of the romances except in the case of Firuz Shāh Nāma. This romance contains a good deal of verse in a heroic meter⁹ which when it appears is appropriate to the action, and which is clearly not from Shāhnāma or any of

⁹ I. e., motacāreb-e mosamman-e maqsur.

the secondary epics. The editor has judged, rightly I believe, that this verse represents an earlier, versified version of Firuz Shāh Nāma. Unfortunately the passages of this verse are never long enough nor are they frequent enough to form any clear judgement about this prototype. It is possible that this verse was made up by the storyteller as he went along. It is perfectly reasonable that a professional storyteller should be able to improvise verse, and the quality of this verse points to this. For several reasons, however, it seems preferable to think of this verse as representing an earlier metrical version or at least a metrical mnemonic.

To begin with, the fragments are all short. Nine lines seems to be the longest that any of these sections runs. Second, they are never complete. That is, they always seem to have been lifted out of a longer piece of verse and dropped into the midst of the prose. Third, they do not occur in a predictable environment. They are scattered throughout the romance and are associated with every type of situation. Fourth, they are often associated with the verse of other poets, which is usually much better poetry than the versified version in Firuz Shāh Nāma.

Why the verse is found this way is not clear. It is possible that the storyteller only remembered snatches of something that he had learned earlier. Again, it is possible that he never knew very much of it or that what he

knew was merely fragments to aid the memory. At any rate the evidence points in the direction of the existence of a metrical version of this romance.

Narrative Elements

There are certain narrative elements which are common to all the romances and which can be considered as characteristics of the genre. This is not to say that they do not appear in other kinds of literature, but only that their quality and frequency in the romances is striking and of fundamental importance. In a sense they can be thought of as the building blocks which the storytellers used to put together their stories. They serve to articulate the skeleton of the plot. All of these elements appear in one form or another in the romances. In any particular romance they will be stressed or played down according to the technique of the storyteller. Each will have its own particular flavor from romance to romance, but basically they remain as constants.

One of these elements we will call the conventional opening phrase. A typical example, chosen at random, is, "Now the relators of news and the narrators of secrets thus relate that . . ." ¹⁰ This is a relatively simple example but will serve to illustrate the nature and function of such phrases. The conventional opening phrase is a stereotyped formula which served, in an undivided and

¹⁰ Firuz Shāh Nāma, II, 143.

unpunctuated text, to signal a change of subject. In effect it is equivalent to the indentation used today to mark the beginning of a new paragraph. It always refers in a strictly conventional fashion, to an undefined body of storytellers, narrators or other transmitters of tales.

The antecedents of this device go back at least to Shāhnāma and probably to the sources of Shāhnāma. At the beginning of some of his major divisions, Ferdowsi describes the sources the story he is about to tell.¹¹ Sometimes the stories are attributed to persons known from other texts to have actually existed. Most scholars agree that these statements were true for the prose text which Ferdowsi versified, but do not represent the actual sources that Ferdowsi used.¹² Thus the convention began of attributing a story to fictional sources. It is likely that this practice was borrowed from the Islamic historians and traditionalists who used esnāds as proof of the validity of a tradition or an anecdote.

The tradition was maintained in the polite literature by the writers of the secondary epics and the later romances, and even by prose writers. Beginning with Ferdowsi, what had been authentic began to be purely conventional and quickly fell into a stylized formula. There was generally a reference to a dehqān, after Ferdowsi, or

¹¹ E.g., Āzād Sarv or Mākh.

¹² Cf. M. Minovi, Ferdowsi va She'r-e U (Teheran, 1346), pp. 76-79.

an old book, daftar-e bāstān, or merely old stories, gof-ta-e bāstān. For example:

"What did the dehqān storyteller say, who sought a good name in the world?" (Farāmarz Nāma, p. 5, borrowed from Shāhnāma, I, 13.)

خندوی دمقان چگوید نخت که نام بزرگی بگیتی که جست

"I heard from a well-spoken dehqān that he was Adam, peace be upon him!" (Khwāju-e Kermāni. Sām Nāma, I, 408.)

شنیدم ز دهقان شیرین کلام که او بود آدم علیه السلام

"Thus I read in an old book which was a collection of the sayings of truthful men." (Humāy Nāma, p. 4.)

چنان خواندم از دفتر باستان که کرده بهم گفته راستان

"Thus do the relators of traditions and the historians say . . ." (Sendbād Nāma, p. 31.)

چنین گویند راویان حریت و خدازندان تاریخ که ...

It is probable that by the time of Khwāju (d. 753/1352) these formulae were almost entirely conventional. Since in no case is the actual source mentioned, but only vaguely referred to, the possibility of there being a specific source appears less certain.

From the increasingly conventional nature of these statements in the polite literature it is only a short step to their completely conventional use in the popular literature. Here the dehqān and the old books are no longer cited, but only the "tellers of tales and the relators of stories". Often the subject of the phrase is in the singular and refers to the storyteller himself. Some

examples follow:

"Now the relators of news and the narrators of secrets and the historians of this history thus relate that . . ."

(Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 1.)

اما رادیان اخبار و ناقلان اسرار و مؤرخان این تاریخ چنین روایت میکنند که...

"Now the author of news and the setter-down of the secrets of this wondrous tale of novelties Abu Ṭāher-e

Ṭarsusi of this story thus relates . . ." (Dārāb Nāma 51.)

اما مولف اخبار و گزارنده اسرار این داستان عجایب نگار بدایع آثار ابو

ظاهر طرسوسی از این قصه چنین روایت میکند که...

"The master of the story and the relator of the tale thus relates that . . ." (Samak-e 'Ayyār, I, 121.)

خداوند حدیث و راوی قصه چنین روایت میکند که...

"The master of the story thus relates that . . ." (Eskandar Nāma 409.)

چنین روایت کند خداوند حدیث که...

"The relators of news have thus said that . . ." (Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza, I, 112.)

رادیان اخبار چنین آورده اند که...

The storytellers of Dārāb Nāma and Firuz Shāh Nāma used these conventional phrases very frequently while the narrator of Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza, which is the least adorned of the romances, uses them sparingly. For example, Firuz Shāh Nāma averages about one such phrase per printed page while Dārāb Nāma averages about one to every two and a half pages.

This tradition has remained alive in popular litera-

ture up to today, and the professional narrators in Iran sometimes begin their stories with such conventional opening phrases.¹³

Another element common to all the romances is the presence of the storyteller in the story. His presence is always felt, and therefore these romances contain an additional barrier between the reader and the story. We are always being told something by the storyteller and we are always conscious of his presence and control over the story. We can not immerse ourselves completely in the world of any particular romance because this world is constantly being invaded by somebody from another world--the storyteller himself.

The storyteller makes his presence felt in several ways. We have seen how he delivers sermons directly to the audience, or shows off his erudition by lecturing the listeners on such subjects as the wonders to be seen on islands. We have also seen how he enters the scene and tells a story just because he likes it and it makes good

دادیان اخبار و ناقلان آثار و طوطیان مکررکن شیرین گفتار... داستان 13
راجع به حرکت کردن سلطان صاحب قرآن... بدین مضمون نقل میکنند.

"The relators of news and the narrators of stories and sweet-speaking, sugar-lipped [lit. sugar-breaking] parrots . . . thus tell . . . the story of the setting out of the Solṭān-e Šāheb Qerān [i.e., Alexander]."

Taken from a tape recording in the writer's possession. The narrator is Borzu, from Teheran.

telling. There are subtler ways of detecting his presence too, and one of them is by the use of epithets. There is never any doubt as to the storyteller's feelings about his characters. In Firuz Shāh Nāma Firuz Shāh is often referred to as Firuz Shāh-e Now Javān, while the troublesome enemy ‘ayyār is frequently called Helāl-e Ḥarām Zāda. Or else a character is described in severe terms, such as Helāl again in Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 777. We have known him for a long time but the storyteller stops to say again what a devious and tricky ‘ayyār he is, this time in rhymed prose. Thus we are often being reminded of facts which we already know.

Another way of showing his presence is for the storyteller to give periodic recapitulations of the story. This happens a number of times¹⁴ and is probably done for the same reason that characters are repeatedly described as good or bad. The audience of the storyteller was not a single individual, as it is in the case of a modern novelist, but a group of people assembled in a particular place at the same time. The membership of such a group was never static, although there was probably a nucleus of regulars. Even the regulars can't be present on some days however, so the storyteller makes it easier for everybody by repeating important bits of information and by bringing the listeners up to date on the progress of the story.

Sometimes the storyteller speaks in the first person

¹⁴ E.g., Dārāb Nāma, I, 157; Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 88, 208.

and says such things as "previously I said that . . ." ¹⁵
 He may ask a rhetorical question, such as, "And what shall
 I say that he sent for the bridegroom: a jewelled crown
 and a ring and a hundred moon-faced slaves and a hundred
 slave-girls and a hundred white servants and a hundred
 horses." ¹⁶ Sometimes the storyteller will announce what
 he is going to do, such as, "Now I will speak of Alexan-
 der's letter." ¹⁷ Other times he will explain why he will
 not do something, such as "And if I were to enumerate
 their letters, the book would become long." ¹⁸ All of
 these occasions establish a bond between the storyteller
 and the listener which is different from the bond between
 the author of a novel and his reader. The listener is in-
 volved in the story by the use of simple and unsophistica-
 ted techniques, but it is these very techniques which help
 give the special flavor to the romances.

One of the most frequently employed narrative devices
 is the letter. For example, in Samak-e 'Ayyār, I and II
 there are forty-four letters; in Firuz Shāh Nāma, I and II
 there are forty-one and in Dārāb Nāma there are twenty-
 seven. They are present in lesser numbers in the other

¹⁵ E.g., Samak-e 'Ayyār, II, 255.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 5.

¹⁷ Dārāb Nāma, MS fol. 237b.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 245b.

romances. In addition to these letters, the text of which is given in the romances, there are many other letters which are merely mentioned, such as, "Darius wrote to Alexander and waited for a reply."

The letters follow a standard form. They begin with a pious reference in Arabic, usually, "In the name of God the Merciful the Beneficent." In the more elaborate openings this is followed by a prayer in Persian. In Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza, this beginning has been changed to try to give an impression of how a pagan would begin his letter, and usually runs something like this: "First, in the name of Lāt and Manāt and Hubal, the Zand and Pazand, the fire temple of Nemrud, the goddess (?) of the lords of Sandufat (?) and Zangbār, the religion of Qobād and the practice of Āferidun, and the sun and moonlight . . ." ¹⁹ Following this is praise for the Prophet, and then the names of the sender and the addressee. The body of the letter contains the message, generally an order, threat or warning, and concludes with va al-salām. When the letter is long the contents are not presented in any logical order.

In one case (Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza, I, 112-19) there is an extremely long letter from a deposed Indian king to Anoshirvān. The contents are a story in themselves and serve to give the background of a civil war in India and provide a justification for Ḥamza's intervention. Thus a touch of realism is added by having this information appear in

¹⁹ Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza, I, 112.

a letter rather than having the storyteller tell it as a part of his narrative.

The letter is not confined to the romances however, for there are several well known letters in Shāhnāma.²⁰ Many letters are found in the secondary epics, and in the romantic maḡnavis of Neẓāmi as well.²¹ The letter is a well-established device in Persian fiction, be it oral or written.

The extensive use of letters in these romances would appear to be an influence from the Greek novel. Research into the background of the Pseudo-Callisthenes Alexander romance indicates that one of its sources was a collection of letters purporting to be from Alexander to his mother, to Aristotle, and others. This collection was combined with a popular romance about Alexander, and information from historical sources to form the basis of the Pseudo-Callisthenes romance.²² In the Greek version there are numerous letters.²³ Letters are also a common device in

²⁰ H. Massé, Les Epopées persanes (Paris, 1935), p. 219 mentions letters by Afrāsiyāb, Key Khosrow, Pirān Visa, and Gudarz as examples.

²¹ E.g., Sharaf Nāma, ed. V. Dastgerdi (Teheran, 1335), p. 184 (Darius' letter to Alexander), and p. 189 (Alexander's reply to Darius).

²² F. Pfister, "Studien zum Alexanderroman," Würzburger Jahrbuch, I(1946), p. 40.

²³ See Pseudo-Callisthenes, The Life of Alexander of Macedon, ed. and trans. E. Haight (New York, 1955).

other Greek novels,²⁴ some of which like Vāmeq va 'Azrā entered Persian literature and became widely known. Greek influence was widespread in Iran in the Hellenistic age and it can be seen from the Persian romances themselves how many incidents are very similar or identical to incidents from classical or Hellenistic literary sources. There were probably other Greek romances which became known in Persia, the names of which we no longer possess. The letter is such a useful device to aid the narrator and provide variety that it must have been adopted quite early by the Persian storytellers.

While the device of the letter itself is in all likelihood borrowed from the Greek novels, the form of the letter is Persian. In fact the introduction to the typical letter in the romances is similar to the openings of some of the Old Persian inscriptions.²⁵ As with so many other literary elements, the motif was borrowed from another literature and its form was assimilated to Persian tradition.

A motif almost as common as the letter in the romances is the dream. In Dārāb Nāma for example, there are forty dreams reported. Unlike the letter, which serves to vary the point of view and transmit necessary information to the audience, the dream is a character's channel of communication with the unseen world. In the dream a divine message is conveyed to the individual in terms of

²⁴ See E. Haight, Essays on the Greek Romances (New York, 1965, c1963), and More Essays on Greek Romances (New York, 1945).

²⁵ E.g., DB.

symbols which must then be interpreted. It is significant that in the popular Persian mind, Aristotle's greatest assets were his expertise in fortune-telling and dream interpretation. These are the divine sciences, the areas of knowledge which go beyond the limited view of the ordinary earthbound man and tap the sources of the unconscious. It was this knowledge which Bozorjmehr had in Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza, and which Aristotle taught Alexander in Dārāb Nāma. Later, after Aristotle and Alexander quarreled, Aristotle closed Alexander's mind to all this knowledge. Alexander no longer had the secret which set him apart from other men, and when he was to receive a divine message, it had to come in a more direct form.

Dreams in the romances serve several purposes. In Firuz Shāh Nāma, the action of the story is motivated by Firuz Shāh's falling in love with 'Ayn al-Ḥayāt in a dream. She shows him her face, and in cryptic words reveals her name and where she dwells. Only a learned vizier can interpret her words, for the heroes can not understand symbolic dreams.

Some dreams save the dreamer from danger. In Dārāb Nāma, Burān Dokht has a dream which causes her to wake up in time to flee from the approaching enemy.²⁶ In the same romance, Aristotle dreams of a coming night attack and is able to take measures to defend the Persians.²⁷

²⁶ MS fol. 210a.

²⁷ MS fol. 253b.

Other dreams instruct the dreamer to do something. In Eskandar Nāma, Alexander is often visited in a dream by a kind of guardian angel, a divine voice which tells him what God's will is. This angel also reassures him when he becomes worried and encourages him when he is discouraged.

The greater proportion of the dreams are prophetic. In these the future is revealed at a crucial moment and the hero is enabled to decide upon a course of action which will save his life or help him gain his end. The dreams are often expressed in symbols so obscure that the modern reader has no idea what their meaning is, and indeed the meanings sometimes seem completely arbitrary. Frequently dream symbols other than the standard ones appearing in popular books on dream interpretation²⁸ appear, and what their source is can not be determined.

Dreams are much more frequent in some of the romances than in others, and those with the fewest dreams are Samak-e 'Ayyār and Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza, the oldest of the romances. This suggests that the greater proportion of the dreams entered the romances as elements of Persian popular culture or Islamic lore. Dreams have always played a great role in folklore and Persian folklore is no exception. Athenaeus (XIX: 275) talks about the Persians and their dreams, and Boyce says that "spell, divination and the interpreting of dreams are prominent in the literature deriv-

²⁸ E.g., Khwābgozāri, ed. I. Afshār (Teheran, 1347).

ing from Middle Persian works."²⁹ These elements do figure in such works as Shāhnāma and Vis o Rāmin, but how prominent they are is questionable. There are several prophetic dreams in Shāhnāma, such as Zāhāk's dream before the birth of Feridun. Afrāsiyāb and Ardashir have similar dreams, all foretelling the fall of a kingdom and the rise of another. Katayun dreams of Goshtāsp before she sees him. Two sources of dream lore have thus come together in the romances. The first is from the older Iranian literary tradition, and the second is from the general Islamic fund of popular lore, partly Persian and partly Middle Eastern.

A motif which on one level is related to the dreams is that of divine intervention on behalf of the hero. Divine intervention appears as a motif in all the romances, and like the dreams, it is more frequent in some than in others. It too takes numerous forms, but ones which can be classified under two major headings; natural, and supernatural forces intervening.

There are numerous examples of natural forces being caused to act in favor of the heroes. For example in Dārāb Nāma, I, 113, a bad storm at sea suddenly arises. On land, dust storms (Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 828), hail storms (Dārāb Nāma, I, 307), or strong winds (Dārāb Nāma, I, 55) appear. Animals frequently play a role, being supernatur-

²⁹ "Middle Persian Literature," in Handbuch der Orientalistik, ed. B. Spuler (Leiden, 1968), I, IV, ii, 51.

ally guided. In Dārāb Nāma, two large bears (I, 110 ff.), a bird (I, 117), a cow (I, 129), a snake (I, 182) and a dragon (I, 335) all intervene. In Eskandar Nāma there is also a snake (416), a cat (290) and an antelope (364). Real or legendary individuals also represent the divine will, such as a monk (Dārāb Nāma, MS fol. 219b), a sage (Dārāb Nāma, MS fol. 286b), Khezr (Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza, I, 159, 226), and Khezr and Elyās together (Eskandar Nāma, 544).

The divine will is manifested in supernatural ways too. For example, a voice will address the hero (Dārāb Nāma, MS fol. 253b; Eskandar Nāma, 213). Dreams have been mentioned above. Sometimes human action is prevented, as in the case of the sword of Firuz Shāh being prevented from striking Alexander (Dārāb Nāma, I, 419), or the thrown stones being turned back on the thrower before reaching their target (Dārāb Nāma, MS fol. 358b). Finally, in Dārāb Nāma, I, 482, Burān Dokht's enemies are separated from those loyal to her while crossing a river, and caused to drown.

These examples do not exhaust the variety of forms which divine intervention takes in the romances. There are numerous other examples, but these are sufficient to show that it is a frequent plot element and of some importance in the stories. Like the dreams, divine intervention is least frequent in the two oldest romances, Samak-e 'Ayyār and Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza. Again this is suggestive of the evolutionary course of this kind of literature, away from its epic model. Just as there are dreams in Shāhnāma, so

there is divine intervention too. An example is the tremendous strength granted by God to Rostam during his battle with Sohrāb. But just as Shāhnāma shows few of the fantastic elements which later came to dominate the romances, so does it show little divine intervention. As the structure of epic literature evolved, so did its narrative elements and the character of its heroes.

What we see in the case of the romances is the emergence and eventual dominance of the Islamic mode of thought. Shāhnāma reflects the Zoroastrian background of pre-Islamic Iran. In both traditions, as reflected in the literature, good must triumph over evil, but the roles of the individual in this cosmic battle are different. In Zoroastrianism the individual is a part of the natural world, which is a good world. The individual was created to aid in the struggle of Ahura Mazda against the evil of Ahriman, and he is the chief actor in the panoply of natural forces arrayed to combat the evil principle. Thus man knows his role and is encouraged to act accordingly. He is an ally of Ahura Mazda and is expected to choose to fight for the good. This attitude of mind is reflected in Shāhnāma, and it is this orientation which makes the characters in Shāhnāma more real and human than the characters in the romances.

Samak-e 'Ayyār is an old romance, but its setting and point of view are strictly Islamic. The fact that it contains less of the fantastic, less divine intervention and

magic than the others is due to its having been set down earlier. What we have in the Samak-e 'Ayyār manuscript is an early version of a story. The other romances undoubtedly underwent a similar evolution, and if we could have heard a storyteller tell Samak-e 'Ayyār in early Safavid days, it without doubt would have been replete with divs and paris, wizards, magic and fantasy. Samak as we know him is much more like the heroes of Shāhnāma in spirit than are the heroes of the other romances, most of which show a more evolved state.

The Islamic cast of mind which gradually took the place of the Zoroastrian was based on an entirely different premise. Now man is no longer an ally of God. He is separated from God by an unbridgeable gulf. This results in man's place and role in the struggle against evil being less well defined for him. The course of man's life is either pre-ordained or at the mercy of fate, neither of which conditions encourages him to take the positive role which the worshippers of Ahura Mazda had. The Zoroastrian could, to his own damnation, choose not to fight for the good, but the Moslem had no such clear-cut choice. All he can do is have faith. One literary reflection of this change in religious basis is the change in the character of the heroes in the romances.

As the social and religious condition in Iran changed from the tenth century on, we see the popular heroes changing too. No longer is the hero of the romance a mighty

warrior, defeating his enemies and gaining his ends by his own personal prowess. The hero slowly becomes a kind of strong, handsome innocent. He does not learn from experience or grow wiser with age, but maintains an eternal youth and freshness. His innocence is important, because he is the chosen one, the instrument of divine will by means of which evil is undone and injustice punished. There are wise men in plenty to advise him, but these wise men must always take a secondary role. They may be able to read the stars or predict the future by other means. They may be able to draw upon the accumulated wisdom of a lifetime of experience and advise the hero accordingly, but they are never heroes themselves. Their role is almost a feminine one, always submissive, always ready to serve, never to lead.

The hero, in effect, does not need to be shrewd, or wise, or full of insight, for he is destined for success from birth. If he should encounter difficulties on his way, the Divine is always observing this progress and is ready to help at a moment's notice. This is why the romantic hero can be fearless. Rostam was fearless because he had confidence in himself. Firuz Shāh (in Firuz Shāh Nāma), for example, is fearless because he knows, unconsciously, that he is divinely protected. This fact is made clear at the beginning of the romances in one of the conventional opening scenes. When the hero is born, the vizier is standing by with his astrolobe to record the po-

sitions of the stars. When the horoscope is read it always says the same thing. The hero will be a world-conqueror, will make an extended voyage to foreign countries, that he will rule with justice and that he has the farr or divine glory. Thus he is born to greatness. There is no question of his achieving greatness or having it thrust upon him. The only problem is through what set of variations on standard themes will his destiny be worked out.

Naturally the more divinely protected the hero is, the more fantastic can be the evils which he must overcome. Here is where the whole array of Islamic superhumans enters. There are paris, divs, jinns, and cafrits, and these are not all. Popular lore and popular religion in the Judeo-Christian tradition have always included witches and similar figures in the service of the devil. If it is believed that witches can enchant people, or individuals can control the jinns, it is only a short step to believing in sorcerers and magicians. These latter are possessed of much greater power than the people who can control the jinns. They control armies of satanic creatures who are dedicated to evil, and the paris and divs are no match for them. Eventually it is this kind of individual with whom the hero must contend. No matter though, for the hero by this time is destined to break spells and render talismans ineffective. His great weapon is his knowledge of the ninety-nine names of God, but his most powerful weapon is his possession of the Greatest Name. Know-

ledge of the Greatest Name is the ultimate divine sanction which the hero may be vouchsafed.

Evil can and will be destroyed, and people will be converted to the true faith. These are the romantic hero's main tasks. His quest for his beloved is the means by which he is carried beyond the bounds of the familiar world to the mysterious overseas lands where evil dwells. There he roams, the fearless innocent, reciting the names of God to destroy guardian jinns and open the doors to fabulous treasures, for doing God's work is rewarded handsomely in this world as well as in the next. When in extremis, the hero can evoke the full and terrible power of the Lord by citing the Greatest Name, and there is no power existing which can withstand it.

The ways in which divine intervention may occur are limited only by the imagination of the storyteller. As the romances evolve from the austerities of epic, they become more and more extravagant, until the excesses of the Safavid Rumuz-e Ĥamza and Eskandar Nāma become simply tedious. The heroes become more symbolic than real, so fantastic are their adventures fighting the wizards. As they become less human they become less believable. Their clubs become monstrously heavy, their armor hardly to be supported by an elephant, their strength and endurance unmeasurable. With all of this they still retain their youthful innocence and beauty.

Given the changing religious emphasis in medieval

Persia, and the growth of a body of popular lore to accompany it, this is a natural and readily understandable evolution of the epic hero. We see therefore that divine intervention on behalf of the hero is a literary manifestation of a popular state of mind. It also helps explain the evolution of the hero's companion, the ‘ayyār.

We have seen how the institution of javānmardi was reflected in the popular romances by the rise in importance of ‘ayyāri and the ‘ayyār. This however does not explain the evolution of the ‘ayyār from the type described in Samak-e ‘Ayyār, through ‘Omar Omayya in Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza to the amazing ‘ayyāri of the Safavid romances, notably Mehtar Nasim-e ‘Ayyār in the Safavid Eskandar Nāma. In Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza, ‘Omar Omayya carries out a few of the conventional acts of an ‘ayyār of the romances, but more than this he is a clown. He rushes out of the ranks at an enemy challenger, cutting such a ludicrous figure that all the troops break into laughter. He then capers about and so befuddles the hero that he can no longer fight. This is a far cry from the ‘ayyāri of Samak or the ‘ayyārs in Firuz Shāh Nāma, and is the result of the same process which caused the epic and its heroes to evolve into romance. The evolution of the figure of the ‘ayyār will not be examined in any further detail and is only mentioned here to show how a figure from real life can become a literary character and undergo a radical change in form. As the popular institution of ‘ayyāri disappeared from the social scene,

the literary conception of the 'ayyār changed radically and he became as unreal as the heroes.

Descriptions of Battles

Up to now we have examined selected motifs or narrative elements which can be individually isolated and studied. We must now consider the battle, which is the one narrative element equally common to all the romances. Fighting is what all the heroes do, and a large part of each romance is taken up with descriptions of battles and the events which precede and follow them. The battle can not be considered strictly as a motif because of its complexity, but must rather be thought of as a cluster of motifs combined to form a set-piece. We shall examine the conventions which make up the battle scene and see that they are very similar in each romance.

The most important and interesting part of any battle scene is the single combat which always precedes it. Patterns of warfare dictated that after the armies had lined up facing each other, a challenger should come forth from each side and fight in single combat. The general battle which always follows the single combat is scarcely ever described in detail, with a few exceptions to be mentioned in the section on Language. The battle itself is generally more decisive than the single combat, but it is the latter which is the more colorful and which attracts the attention of all the storytellers. The same is true today

among the naqqāls of Teheran, who save their verbal fireworks for the single combats, often embellishing them with recitations of set-pieces in baḥr-e ṭavil and other devices of naqqāli.

The model for a conventional battle description would consist of the following sequence of seven standard elements, possibly rounded out with some favorite elements of a particular storyteller. First there will be a scene of drums beating at dawn to rouse the armies and let the enemy know that you are preparing to fight. This is followed by the drawing up of the battle lines. Second will come a description of a hero's armor and horse. Third will be the preliminaries to single combat, such as a description of how the hero rides out into the field, and the boasting that both challengers indulge in before the actual combat. Fourth will follow the single combat itself, and this will occupy the most important position in the whole complex of motifs. Its description will be the longest, the most detailed and the most colorful of all the parts of any particular battle. Fifth will be the battle itself, which may only merit a few lines from the storyteller. At the end of the day the sixth element will appear, and that is the beating of the ṭabl-e āsāyesh, the drum which signals the end of the day's fighting and which calls the troops back to their camp. Finally the night falls and the watch patrols (called ṭalāya "vanguard") are sent out. This is the seventh element.

Thus the battle must be thought of as a composite piece, bounded in time by dawn and sunset, and containing certain conventional sections in a fixed order. Naturally there are variations. Some single combats extend over a period of days; some battles are fought at night, and so on. Each storyteller has his own favorite events with which he makes his battle descriptions different from those of anybody else. For example in Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza there is a frequently-repeated scene where Ḥamza, in single combat, insists on taking the first three blows. In one such scene, Bahrām the enemy challenger says to Ḥamza,

'You strike first.' Amir Ḥamza said, 'It is never my custom to attack first.' Bahrām took up his club which weighed seven hundred mans³⁰ and spurred his horse. The Amir drew his shield over his head. Bahrām struck the Amir on the head with such force that both armies heard the sound. Wise men said, 'If this had not been the Amir but had been Alexander, he would have been in danger from this club, but the Amir conducted himself manfully'.

Amir Ḥamza said, 'Bahrām, you have two more blows, so strike!' He attacked again, and his club struck the Amir's shield with such force that Amir Ḥamza's horse sank into the ground to its knees. The Amir skillfully warded off this one too, and Bahrām struck for the third time. With a thousand difficulties the Amir took this blow as well.

Then the Amir's turn came. He seized the club of Ghashshām ibn 'Alqama of Kheybar, spurred the horse of the Prophet Isaac (peace be upon him!), and struck Bahrām on the head. Every hair of Bahrām oozed a drop of blood and his horse's spine snapped.³¹

This scene is repeated almost word for word seven

³⁰ Approximately 2500 pounds. Cf. W. Hinz, Islamische Masse und Gewichte (Leiden, 1955).

³¹ Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza, I, 90-91.

times in Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza, I, but is peculiar to only that romance. The other storytellers have similar favorite pieces.

The single combat is so prominent a part of the battle description³² and therefore of the romances themselves, that it would be worth translating one of the shorter ones as an example. This one is from Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 292-94, and contains several of the fundamental elements of the conventional battle description. These will be indicated.

The sound of war drums was heard from both sides. The youths of Yemen and Iran mounted their speeding, leaping Arabian horses and moved about the battlefield. Yellow, violet and white banners waved and the earth was a reed-bed of lances. The officers of both armies did their duty and ordered their ranks. On the Persian side, Khorshid Shāh and Bahman-e Zarrin Qabā were in the center. [Element I].

The wind blew across the field and swept it clean of brush and dust. The first rider to take the field was a horseman mounted on an Arabian horse which bore a caparison of Chinese mirrors. He wore a cloak of green and a gold-inlaid, four-sided helmet with a visor. There was a glistening sword at his side and he had a Gilaki shield slung across his back. Around his waist was a jewel-studded belt; he carried a Khwārazmian bow and a quiver of white poplar arrows was fastened to his waist. A silken lasso hung down from his saddle, and across the pommel of the saddle lay a heavy club. He wore greaves and rerebraces. [Element II].

He entered the field in a warlike manner, flourished his weapons impressively, removed his helmet and placed it before his saddle, and shouted out so that both armies could hear. 'Whoever knows me, knows me, and whoever does not, be informed that I am a slave of King Dārāb and servant of Prince Firuz Shāh. I am Siāmak-e Siāh Qabā, and

³² For example, in Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, there are at least twenty-seven single combats described. Many of these scenes are composed of a number of such combats, thus almost doubling this figure.

am at the service of the nobles of Iran. Come you Yemenis to the field and I will deal with you in such a way that it will become a by-word in the world.³³ Having said this, he replaced his helmet on his head, rode up and down the field and sought an opponent.

Shāh Asad asked, 'Who is this who comes to the field with such bravery and style?' The spies told him that it was Siāmak-e Siāh Qabā, an extremely brave and bold warrior. Shāh Asad shouted to his army, 'One of you go out there and bring this Persian back to me tied up.' A brave and experienced fighter named Ḥamirā was standing nearby, so he mounted his jet-black horse and armed himself. He spurred his horse, rode up and down the field and called out, 'Persian, you seem to think that in the kingdom of the Arabs there is no man who is a match for you. Now let us fight!' [Element III].

He took his lance firmly in hand and attacked Siāmak. He too fought with his lance and they battled so fiercely that both sides were amazed. Finally with a blow of his spear to Ḥamirā's waist he knocked him from the saddle to the ground and rode his horse over him. Ḥamirā was still moving so he cut off his head with a blow of his sword. Then he leaned down from his horse, picked up the head of Ḥamirā, threw it into the midst of the enemy army and shouted, 'If there is a man among you, say so and come out to the field so that we may fight.' [Element IV].

This single combat continues for a long time and Siāmak kills a large number of enemy challengers. Finally both armies engage in battle [Element V] and the whole set-piece comes to its conventional conclusion. Only enough was translated here to give a flavor of this complex of motifs which plays such an important part in the make-up of the romances. The main structure of the battle scene is not peculiar to the romances, for it is very much the same in Shāhnāma and the secondary epics. This

³³ It might be noted here that the custom of public boasting before a single combat is still alive. The most recent examples are the poetic effusions of Mohammad Ali (Cassius Clay) before his prizefights.

structure is elaborated to enormous length in the romances and is padded out with every sort of detail, yet it is one of the narrative elements which did not lose its basic form as the epic evolved into romance.

Language

The main linguistic distinction of the romances is that they are not written in the polite literary language of the time. We know nothing of how the romances sounded when told by the storyteller, but we do know what they sound like now that they have been written down. The romances under discussion were set down over a period of approximately four hundred years, during which time the language of polite literature changed considerably. The earliest manuscript was written not before 585/1189-90, approximately contemporary with Rāvandi and Ibn Fonduq, and the latest manuscript is dated 992/1584-85, contemporary with Ḥasan Beg Rumlu and Eskandar Monshi. The differences in prose style between these two extremes are well known and can be studied readily in the analysis of Bahār.³⁴ In spite of these changes in the literary language, the language of the romances changed very little. There is a general homogeneity of style to be found in them all, naturally with individual variations.

Detailed studies of the grammatical patterns and lex-

³⁴ Sabk Shenāsi, 3 vols. (Teheran, 1337), vols. II and III.

icon of Eskandar Nāma and Dārāb Nāma have been published.³⁵ In addition to these, the editors have added glossaries of unusual words and expressions to the printed texts of Firuz Shāh Nāma and Eskandar Nāma, so no further analysis of this nature will be undertaken here. Instead, some of the features of the style, general and specific, will be examined.

First, how does the language of the romances differ from that of the polite literature contemporary with the manuscripts? The differences are lexical, syntactical, morphological and phonological, in that order of importance. The lexicon of the romances is primarily differentiated from that of the polite literature by the relatively lower percentage of Arabic words and expressions. At the same time there is a relatively higher percentage of unusual Iranian words. Naturally there are numerous Arabic words used, but these are largely words which had long since become an integral part of the Persian language and could not be dispensed with without causing considerable difficulty to the Persian speakers. Lazard's statistical study of Arabic borrowings into Persian is concerned with the polite literature and its conclusions are not valid for the romances.³⁶ In this regard the romances show no discernible increase in the number of Arabic words or occur-

³⁵ Of Eskandar Nāma, in *ibid.*, II, esp. 128-151; of Dārāb Nāma, in M. P. Gonābādi, "Dārāb Nāma," Sokhan, XII (1340), 92-108.

³⁶ "Les Emprunts arabes dans la prose persane du X^e au XII^e siècle: aperçu statistique," Revue de l'École Nationale des Langues Orientales, Paris, II(1965), 53-67.

rences with the passage of time.

Secondly, the syntax of the language of the romances is, with certain exceptions (see below) less complicated than that of the contemporary polite literature. Sentences are usually shorter and generally consist of a series of very short sentences or phrases strung together by coordinating conjunctions.³⁷ There are relatively few dependent clauses in the sentences, and almost never does the complex clause-within-a-clause-within-a-clause structure of the florid literary prose appear. Parataxis is uncommon. Occasionally the word order is very similar to that of modern-day colloquial speech, where the order subject-object/complement-verb may be changed to subject-verb-object/complement.³⁸

Third are the morphological and phonological differences, but these are less important stylistically than the lexical and syntactic. The morphological and phonological differences consist largely of local or dialectical peculiarities. These are more of linguistic than stylistic interest, and when thoroughly analyzed will be helpful in localizing the area of the storyteller's speech.

³⁷ Occasionally a sentence will sound like a literal translation from Arabic, such as in Eskandar Nama, 308: Pas betarsid tarsidan-e sakht'azim.

³⁸ Cf. the current man raftam manzel instead of the more polite man be manzel raftam.

One interesting example of this which the editor of Dārāb Nāma chose to overlook is the use of the form bu- instead of be- as the pre-verb preceding a labial, as in the case of bu-binad for be-binad (other persons, singular and plural as well as third singular). The manuscript clearly shows بو بیند in at least eighty per cent of the occurrences of the present stem of didan preceded by the pre-verb be.³⁹ In each case the editor has chosen to print the form be-vinad, بویند . The form bu- for be- appears occasionally with other verbs as well, for example in MS fol. 247b there is bu-paziram; on fol. 256a there is an imperative bu-band, and on fol. 326a there is a present subjunctive bu-pichand.

These qualities of fewer Arabic words and a very small "learned" vocabulary, and a simple syntax comprised of short phrases and sentences linked by conjunctions suggest a rather colorless and uninteresting style when one might be faced with reading thousands of pages of it. This is true to some extent, but the monotony is relieved by two devices which change the texture of the prose and add variety to the style. One is the use of a moderately florid style for certain conventional descriptions, and the other is the use of verse.

³⁹ E.g., in Dārāb Nāma, I, 560, line 3, there is be-vinad, while the corresponding passage in the Bibliothèque Nationale manuscript, Suppl. Persan 837, which is the basic manuscript used by the editor, has bu-binad, بو بیند .

In a footnote the editor cites the form be-binad بو بیند in the Bibliothèque Nationale manuscript Suppl. Persan 838.

As we have seen in the case of sunrises and sunsets, the language used to describe them is, in choice of vocabulary and metaphors, similar to the language of court poetry. This same shift of style occurs in other descriptive passages too. Very dark nights are described in a style resembling that used for sunrises.⁴⁰ In these descriptions the metaphors are not extended beyond a few phrases at the most.

In a second kind of adorned prose, the metaphors become much longer, and may extend to the entire length of the passage. An example of this is a description of an inkwell and pen in Samak-e 'Ayyār.

Then Shahrān the vizier ordered that the black-stained tray, and the round, moon-like box with lasso-like tresses, and the quiver of arrows be brought. They placed it before him. Shahrān opened the small chest of the quiver and brought out a bird which lacked feathers, wings, a head and feet. With a sword of victory he severed the head of that bamboo-like bird and set it to flight until it plunged down into the dark box. It began to rain black from its beak onto the white page, and the secrets of Ar-mān Shāh's heart became manifest. What kind of a bird was this which lacked a tongue yet spoke, and without speech reported conditions, and without wings flew, and without feet walked, and without eyes pointed things out? With its weak form and slender body and humble stature and blind eye, what sort of bird was it which grappled with lions, battled with kings, took vengeance on champions, yet feared no man and never retreated? It was a bird such as the poet described thus:

Why am I wounded and tired
 When I have become rich from this branch?
 For when I take it up
 Pearls and jewels rain from its beak.
 Its unstable body is dry of thought
 But its eloquent tongue is moist with speech.

⁴⁰ E.g., Firuz Shāh Nāma, I, 779.

Since it is deaf, how did it learn words and meanings?
 Since it is blind, how did it learn to see and move?
 Has anyone seen other than he (oh wonder!)⁴¹
 A blind world-viewer and a deaf orator?

The third type of embellished language used to vary the texture of the prose involves the use of saj^c or rhymed and rhythmic prose. Saj^c, like the previous two kinds of prose, appears in all the romances and would seem to be a standard device of the storytellers. The most extensive and imaginative examples of this style appear in Firuz Shāh Nāma, and they are usually reserved for descriptions of beautiful women. The best example follows, with no effort to catch the rhyme or rhythm of the original.

Jahān Afruz dressed 'Ayn al-Ḥayāt, and 'Ayn al-Ḥayāt adorned Jahān Afruz. Those two ladies of the court and those two royal feast-adorners and those two straight cypresses; those two flowery faces and linked-tresses; those two Venus and Mercuries; those two suns and moons, and honeys and sugars, and soul-increasers and heart-stealers; those two Houris and two lights and two joys; those two slender waists and peaceful souls and swaying cypresses and ruby lips and pistachio-mouths and bow-like eyebrows and apple-chins and coral teeth and pomegranite-breasts and souls and auspicious ones; those two city-adorners and soul-increasers and heart-stealers; those two world-burners and earth-igniters and Springs and New Years; those two wells of life and sweet-speakers; those sugar-pourers and inciters and blood-shedders; those two army-defeaters and silver bodies and stars of Yemen and adornments of meadows; one the ruler of Turkestan and the other the Queen of Women; one lily-cheeked and one wavy-haired; one the shining moon and one the Queen of Beauties; one the moon of the earth and one dearer than the soul; one flower-cheeked and one sweetly-spoken; one with arched eyebrows and one with plump arms; one with a silvery leg and one unique in the world; one like an antelope's eye and one with black hair; one dressed in linen and one with a shell-pink ear; one crowned and one a ruler; one master of the field and one a kingly pearl; one

⁴¹ Samak-e 'Ayyār, II, 260-61.

born of the angels and one born of paris; one parrot-spoken and one partridge-gaited; those two queens of beauty entered the hall of Firuz Shāh.⁴²

This is truly a virtuoso performance on the part of the storyteller, and is not surpassed in any of the other romances.

In addition to passages of adorned prose, there are occasional examples of word-plays,⁴³ assonance,⁴⁴ reversed syntax⁴⁵ and other rhetorical devices, including morā'āt al-naẓir.⁴⁶ Similar examples of these devices occur in all the texts but they are unusual and often seemingly accidental. The principal method of varying the prose style itself is by the introduction of passages of adorned language as we have seen above.

The second way in which the texture of the narration is made more varied is by the introduction of verse. This is a characteristic which popular prose shares with its

⁴² Firuz Shāh Nāma, II, 277-78.

⁴³ E.g., Samak-e 'Ayyār, II, 18:

خادم فریاد کنان بر خاست و کوزه آب در دست گرفت و پای در نهاد تا
ایشانرا آب دهد که سگ عیار کاردی آب دار بر آب گاه منگول چنان زد که

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 69:

در حال جان تسلیم کرد

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 26:

اکنون در کار بیدار و هشیار باش که هر بار سبوی از آب ...

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 165 (of a horse):

چون کوه پاره ای. گفتی خاک و باد و آب و آتش است

polite counterpart, for verse is just as frequently used in the romances as it is in the book of history or ethics of the court writers.

In the romances the verse is from two sources; it is either composed by the storyteller himself (or transmitted by him from an earlier versified version of the story), or it is borrowed from other poets, both famous and obscure. Verse from the first source has been discussed above in the matter of the possible versified prototype of Firuz Shāh Nāma. The second source needs little comment except to say that Ferdowsi is the most widely quoted. Others cited are Daqiqi, Sanā'i, Neẓāmi, Fakhr-e Gorgāni, 'Onṣori, Mas'ud-e Sa'd-e Salmān, Farrokhi, Labibi, Adib-e Ṣāber, Serāj-e Balkhi, Sa'di and Ḥāfeẓ. There are also numerous unidentified verses. Only rarely do the narrators identify the source of a line of poetry. Verse citations are seldom longer than four or five lines.

Verses quoted are usually not repeated in other parts of the text, except for the case of Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza, where in Vol. I, there is one verse which is repeated nine times and another six times. Verse usually appears associated with a battle or with a lyrical passage of love or relaxation. Seldom do verses appear during the scenes of 'ay-yāri, the peculiar quality of the action and the suspense involved in these scenes making it awkward to fit in a verse and dangerous to the continuity of the tension.

Among the techniques of the present-day storyteller

there is one which can be called naqqāli. This may be described as a style of dramatic recitation employed to describe something extraordinary, like a special horse, an exceptional camel, a beautiful woman, an important battle, a mighty warrior, and the like. What differentiates naqqāli from ordinary narration or the use of fancy language as described above is partly the storyteller's delivery and partly his language. When a storyteller has gotten "warmed up" (garm shoda ast), and is ready to deliver a passage of naqqāli, his voice may change in pitch and volume. His phrases become shorter and are spoken more quickly, and his gestures more tense and expressive. If the passage is rhythmical, as we will see below, he may emphasize the rhythm with short chops of his hand or motions of his head, signalling climaxes with loud clapping of his hands. The language is usually a succession of very short phrases or sentences delivered at a faster rate than normal and which create a dramatic tension as long as the passage lasts. Sometimes the naqqāli is a catalog of nouns or adjectives. The passages usually are of short duration, a minute or two at the most, but are the display-pieces of any narrator and produce a visible effect on the listeners. Today the technique is largely lost and good naqqāli, according to the naqqāls themselves, is seldom heard any more. I was able to tape record some narrations by professional naqqāls in Teheran and among them are a few passages which can qualify as naqqāli, at

least as it is thought of today.

It is interesting to note that there are passages in the romances which, even in print, have the stamp of naqqāli. Compare these two passages from Firuz Shāh Nāma with a passage tape recorded from a naqqāl:

چون چشم قیصر روم بر جمال شاه خوبان افتاد آن چشم نرگسین و
موی مشکین دآن عارض گلگون دآن سکل موزون دآن روی چون
ماه دآن زلفین سیاه دآن لبان چون یاقوت دآن روح راقوت ،
در خواب بهوشی ؛ در جهان امروز چون گل تدرود در پہلوی عین
الحیات خفته ...

Firuz Shah Nama, II, 305.

آن دو شکر ریز دآن دو نمنه انگیز و آن در خون ریز ،
آن دو لشکر شکن و آن دو سیمین بدن دآن در سهیل یمن و
آن در آرایش چمن ، یمنی شاه ترکستان و یمنی سلطان زنان ، یمنی لاله
روی د یمنی جعد موی ، یمنی ماه تابان د یمنی شاه خوبان ، یمنی ماه جوان
د یمنی خوشتر از جان ، یمنی گلنزار د یمنی خوب گفتار ، یمنی طاق ابرو
د یمنی گرد بازو

Firuz Shah Nama, II, 277-78.

امیر از روی تخت فرمود بزمن به چینیید . حسب الامر بساط نشاط گستردند ؛
 راز هر مقوله عیش فراهم آوردند . باده خلری گفتی لعل بدخشان است . ساغر بلور
 مهر بدخشان ؛ سنبل و گل طبق طبق ریخته ، ریاحین و گل ورق ورق آمیخته . گل
 دسته دسته ، ستایق بسته بسته . گل در دامن ، سنبل در خرمن . شمع روشن (برق
 روشن) . معود سوخته ، جگر افروخته . بادام منقا ، لوز مصفا . مینا در گریه ، صهبا
 در خنده . راز من ، چغانه من . طیبورد در آ چون دل عاشقان بریان ، شمع
 مانند دیده مجوران گریان ، دف در کف ، چنگ در چنگ ، رود در سرود ، سنج
 در مصت ، زنگ در انگشت ...

From a tape recording of Borzu made by the writer.

These passages and others from the romances, when set next to similar passages from present-day nagqāls suggest that the techniques of storytelling are basically the same as they were five or six hundred years ago, and have been handed down from narrator to narrator until the present. The tradition today appears to be moribund and doomed to disappear. This is not to imply, however, that the romances as we have them now, if read out loud, would sound the same as they did when told orally by the narrators who set them down. The language which one speaks is always different from the language which one writes, and the example of a storyteller is no different. A storyteller who writes down the same tales which he tells orally, will probably achieve a closer correspondence between his written and oral styles than someone who is not a storyteller.

There will still be a difference in the two styles though, and a modern example is available which is illuminating in this respect.

The Persian literary magazine Jong published two articles on a present-day naqqāl from Isfahan. One article contained the transcription of a tape recording made of him telling a story in a coffee house,⁴⁷ and the other contains an excerpt from a book which this naqqāl is in the process of writing.⁴⁸ The stories concerned are not the same, which would have made the comparison more interesting. Nevertheless even a superficial examination of the two will reveal stylistic differences. The language of the tape recording is very colloquial, with the usual contractions (khub-e for khub ast), phonological changes (bā-run for bārān), syntactical changes (mirim darbār) and popular usages (tu-ye manzel) of present-day speech. In addition, in the spoken example there are occasional slips, such as, "Pirān istād. Tamāshā mikonad. Inhā nazdik sho-dand," where he changes from past to present to past tense. In the written example the syntax is more conventional. Sentences are often long strings of participial phrases with a finite verb at the end. There are also pseudo-learned forms such as heykalan هیکلان. Besides this,

⁴⁷ J. Dustkhwāh, "Naqqāli, Honar-e Dāstān Sarā'i-e Melli," Jong, VII(1345), pp. 73-88.

⁴⁸ Ibid., "Dāstān-e Garshāsp," Jong, V(1346), pp. 99-106. The naqqāl is Morshed 'Abbās Zarīri of Isfahan.

there are more Arabic words and expressions used than in the spoken example.

For all of these differences however, the two styles strongly resemble one another, and it would probably be safe to say that the same holds true for the language and style of the romances. So while we have a simple and speech-like style in the romances, it still can not be said to be the language of everyday speech of the medieval common man, although without doubt it is the closest thing we have to it.

Conclusion

Pizzi, in discussing Persian literature, says that the history of literature should by no means concern itself with popular stories, and adds that he will only mention an immense and undigested collection of absurd and juvenile tales made by an Arab, Abu Taher di Tarsus.¹

It is my hope that I have been able to show that this restricted view of Persian literature is no longer tenable, and that popular romances form a genre of considerable importance. As a group they should acquire a secure place in the history of Persian literature and add a new dimension to its already multi-faceted form. The importance of the romances as a genre, aside from their individual interest, is threefold: literary, linguistic and social.

In addition to constituting a body of literature which has its own special qualities and delights, the romances illustrate the evolution of epic literature on the popular level. Here is epic literature in its final metamorphosis, a vast distance from its archetype, but still clearly descended from it. On this ground it merits a place in the general history of Persian literature. Not all of it is of great literary value, but it represents nevertheless a serious and prolonged attempt to tell a

¹ Storia della poesia persiana (Turin, 1894), II, 86.

story, convey a message and entertain people. It has a structure and form which were determined by the social situation and the creative process which gave birth to it. Its themes and motifs often come from deep in the Iranian past and touch hidden psychological chords in the listeners. These qualities give this genre a literary importance which can not be denied.

Linguistically these romances bring to light examples of the Persian language which are on an entirely different level from that of polite literature. Here the language is, for the most part, uncontrived and unadorned. It is a language which must be close to what the storytellers used and which their listeners understood and in which they felt at home. The popular expressions, grammatical forms, syntactical patterns, phonological changes and orthographic conventions are all of interest and are present in abundance. From the romances we can have a reasonably accurate idea of what the spoken Persian of the day must have been like, and this kind of information is available from no other source.

Finally, the romances have great value as social documents. Glimpses of everyday life, both of the common people and the courtiers, may be had from them, but it is the former which is more important. There is no other source in Persian literature as revealing not only of the habits and customs of medieval Persians but of their taste and attitudes as well. The romances should be prime

sources for social as well as literary historians.

In the larger cultural context the romances will help to round out the total picture of medieval Persian culture. Hitherto this has been a one-sided picture because the documents have all come from court-supported historians, literary critics, secretaries and panegyrists. Now the popular side of Persian culture can receive more attention and the twentieth century student of Persia's past will be able to see that past in a new light.

The End

Appendix

Brief Summaries of the Romances

Dārāb Nāma

Eskandar Nāma

Firuz Shāh Nāma

Qeṣṣa-e Ḥamza

Samak-e ‘Ayyār

Dārāb Nāma

Chap. 1. The introduction begins with the story of Zāl and his sons. Zāl dies, cursing Bahman ibn Esfandyār. Bahman, also called Ardashir, goes to Egypt and marries Homāy, the daughter of King Sām-e Hāresh. In a fight with a dragon Bahman is slain, and Homāy is crowned queen of Iran.

Chap. 2. Homāy is now called the daughter of Ardashir, and is pregnant by her father. A son is born having the farr, the royal glory, and the signs of kingship. His birth is kept secret and Homāy places him in a box and floats him down the Euphrates. He is found by a washerman who takes the boy home and names him Dārāb because he found him in the water. Up to ten years of age Dārāb washes the clothes, but after that he demands a horse and armor. He rebels against his "father", and kills the local Amir's chamberlain. The Amir captures him and reads his horoscope, which says that at age seventeen Dārāb will be king of the world. The Amir adopts him as a son.

The Amir owes tribute to Homāy and has not paid it. Homāy sends her general Zāhāk to attack the Amir and take the tribute. He attacks the Amir's city and Dārāb single-handedly holds off the whole army. Zāhāk flees to Baghdad, Homāy's capital. She suspects that Dārāb is her son.

Chap. 3. Dārāb enters the court in disguise but Homāy seizes him. He kills several warriors, humiliates

Zahāk and flees. Homāy brings him back and seats him on the throne next to her. She is accused by the courtiers of being in love with Dārāb. His horoscope reveals his true identity to Homāy. Dārāb, aggressive and hot-tempered, kisses Homāy during a drinking party, after which there is a fight, and he is put in chains. There is a revolt against Homāy over the Dārāb affair because she has elevated him over all the other courtiers. After Homāy and Dārāb have identical dreams, she tells him the story of his birth and offers him the kingship. A dream tells him that he is not yet ready for kingship, so he kills Zahāk and leaves Baghdad, vowing to return at the proper time.

Chap. 4. Dārāb sets out on a quest to find the washerman. On the way he fights first the princes of 'Omān, then their whole army, which includes a contingent of fierce Zangis. After much fighting and some divine aid Dārāb retreats to an island. The island sinks into the sea, but he is saved by a passing fleet. The admiral locks him up, but a Persian jailor frees him. They reach land and Dārāb must fight the local king's army. The king is killed and his wife Ṭamrusiyya falls in love with Dārāb. Together they sail away in a ship.

Chap. 5. They reach their first island, where they are set upon by fierce blacks. They take refuge in a tree and divine aid in the form of a huge bear saves them. Later a bad storm arises and drowns all the blacks. Dārāb

and Ṭamrusiyya build a raft and sail away.

On the second island they meet an old man beside a minaret. They ignore his advice not to enter it, and go in to seek the treasure. They can not escape. A divinely sent bird saves them and they sail away again.

Having reached the third island, Dārāb goes to the bazaar to buy a bow but can not find a suitable one. The king has a bow which once belonged to Esfandyār, and offers a reward to whomever can draw it. Dārāb draws it, takes the reward and sails off on the raft, this time taking along a friendly old man.

The fourth island is inhabited by cannibals who have a feast and eat most of Dārāb's party. The king desires Ṭamrusiyya and the king's wife, Dārāb. This results in Dārāb and Ṭamrusiyya being thrown into a well, but divine intervention saves them. A monk directs them to a miraculous spring which cures their wounds. They sail away.

They reach the fifth island after killing a shipload of Jews en route. Dārāb fights the king's forces and is falsely reported dead to Ṭamrusiyya. She is lured away on a ship by a lecherous Persian, and Dārāb falls asleep in a boat by the shore.

Dārāb wakes up at an island of sun worshippers. He has been towed there by a giant fish which has the boat's mooring line caught in its teeth. At night the fish returns to the first island. Dārāb goes back and forth for several days until an old man tells him to get out at the

island of sun worshippers. There the king Laknād enlists Dārāb's aid in defeating his enemy. Dārāb is successful, and the old king retires, crowning Dārāb. Dārāb marries the king's daughter Zankelisā.

Chap. 6. Ṭamrusiyya and the Persian reach an island built on stilts and remain for seven years. Her brother Mehrāsp arrives, searching for Dārāb, and the two escape from the Persian in a merchant ship. They touch at an island infested by pigs and continue on to an island of monkeys. After four months of imprisonment they escape to a cave by the sea and are saved by a passing ship. A storm sinks the ship and brother and sister cling to a floating log. When the sea calms Mehrāsp is missing. Ṭamrusiyya drifts to an island and discovers her brother under a tree which bears fruit with human faces. They camp by the sea and the mer-folk come to greet them. A mermaid falls in love with Mehrāsp and brings him jewels from the sea. He keeps her with him and in revenge her sea husband captures Ṭamrusiyya and takes her away. Mehrāsp and the mermaid live together for four years and then she returns to the sea.

Chap. 7. Mehrāsp builds a raft and sails away. He nears a mountain and the sea sweeps him through a tunnel. Two days later he emerges and lands on an island inhabited by one-eyed, Greek-speaking people. Because he has two eyes he is honored and made king. He marries the former king's widow Gowhar Āsā, who is the daughter of Laknād and the sister of Zankelisā whom Dārāb married. A plot

takes shape and Gowhar Āsā is killed. Dārāb hears of this and attacks the island. The people hand over Mehrāsp to Dārāb, but Mehrāsp uses a false name and Dārāb does not recognize him. Mehrāsp is put into a box and thrown into the sea. Dārāb moves his kingdom to the island and sends for his wife Zankelisā.

Chap. 8. Ṭamrusiyya is taken by the mer-folk to an island where she becomes involved in a battle between divs and paris. After a year on the island, a ship bearing Zankelisā to Dārāb lands there. They rescue Ṭamrusiyya and she tells her story to Zankelisā. Zankelisā faints at the mention of Dārāb and has Ṭamrusiyya thrown into the sea. A following ship picks her up and a sailor and his wife promise to take her to Dārāb. They all reach an island and after almost being recognized by Zankelisā, Ṭamrusiyya flees to the forest and the ships sail without her. After a year on the island she is caught by a slave trader and allotted to a Greek, along with three other girls. They acquire another slave girl and it is Zankelisā, whose bad luck came as a result of her having thrown Ṭamrusiyya into the sea. One of the girls is 'Azrā who tells of her love of Vāmiq. They all tell their stories and are reconciled. Zankelisā's father Laknād arrives with an army, and she betrays the other women in order to gain her father's help against Ṭamrusiyya.

Chap. 9. Dārāb and Ṭamrusiyya are reunited. The king and queen of the island are killed and Dārāb is made

king by acclamation. Dārāb and Ṭamrusiyya are married, and shortly after, Laknād and Zankelisā arrive with a fleet of ships. Ṭamrusiyya is jealous of Zankelisā and sails off to warn Dārāb who is hunting on another island. She meets Zankelisā's ship at sea, and Zankelisā kills Ṭamrusiyya. Dārāb returns to find her dead but her child alive. He names the child Dārāb because he found it in the water. Laknād and Zankelisā die of snakebites and Dārāb decides to return to Iran.

Chap. 10. While at sea Dārāb finds Mehrāsp floating in a box. They cure his blindness and leave him as king of Dārāb's island domain. Dārāb returns to the island, marries Ṭamrusiyya's sister, takes his son Dārāb and sails for Iran with a large fleet and great riches. They reach 'Omān but because Dārāb had not been properly thankful, all his ships sink and his men and possessions are lost. He is reduced to cleaning the stables in a caravanserai, where he meets a rich merchant. The merchant is the same washer who found Dārāb as an infant. A messenger from Homāy arrives asking for the aid of 'Omān against Rum. The king allies himself with Dārāb and they march to Shāh-puragān, which is deserted because the Persian army has revolted against Homāy. The army of 'Omān revolts against Dārāb but a divinely sent hailstorm kills them all. Dārāb leaves his son with his wife and marches to Rey.

Chap. 11. On orders from the Qeysar of Rum, the Amir of Rey imprisons Homāy. Dārāb rescues her and the Qeysar

crowns himself king. Homāy's general Rashnavād escapes and together they hold off the enemy army until divine aid comes for the Persians. Homāy and Dārāb are separated but Dārāb is divinely guarded by a dragon. The Qey-sar retreats to Tabaristan. Dārāb and Homāy are reunited.

Chap. 12. Homāy gives the kingship to Dārāb. He gathers forces from all sides and battles the Qey-sar at Rey. Dārāb captures him, and he dies doing forced labor. The Qey-sar's brother, Feylaqus, who is now the king of Rum, has allied himself with an Arab chieftain Sho^ʿeyb, and moves against Iran. Homāy is killed by a black slave who tries to rape her.

Chap. 13. Sho^ʿeyb kills the general Rashnavād, and Dārāb captures the Arab. He releases him but Sho^ʿeyb plots with Feylaqus. Dārāb captures Feylaqus but he later escapes and flees toward Rum. Dārāb catches up with him in Antioch. He writes to Feylaqus saying that the only thing he wants from him is his daughter Nāhid.

Chap. 14. Feylaqus' advisor predicts the marriage of Nāhid to Dārāb and her later return to Rum, and urges Feylaqus to give her to Dārāb. He does so and they are married. She becomes pregnant but Dārāb sends her back to Rum because of her bad breath. She gives birth in secret to Alexander and exposes him on a mountain near the cell of Aristotle. The infant is reared by an old woman whose goat suckles him. At age four she takes him to Aristotle, who trains him in astrology and dream-inter-

preting. He keeps Alexander until he is ten, then sends him to Feylaqus. Dārāb dies of old age and Dārāb II becomes king. Nāhid marries a prince of Barbar, Firuz Shāh. Alexander is forced to flee to Barbar after an involvement with Nāhid's sister. There he achieves fame as an astrologer and dream-interpreter. He displeases the king, and he and Nāhid return to Rum. Feylaqus makes Alexander king. After a dispute with three sons of Feylaqus, Alexander plans to go to his half-brother in Iran for help in regaining his throne. Plots develop and he flees to Aristotle, but his allies bring him back and he is acclaimed king.

Chap. 16. Dārāb learns of Alexander but will not believe that they are half-brothers. Aristotle and Alexander argue and Aristotle causes Alexander to lose all of his knowledge; a symbolic loss of his farr. He will now attack Iran to gain the other half of his inheritance. Dārāb and Alexander fight at the Euphrates. Alexander pays two of Dārāb's officers to assassinate him, but later is remorseful and kills the traitors. He promises to carry out Dārāb's dying wishes, and becomes king of Iran.

Chap. 17. Dārāb has a daughter Burān Dokht who swears revenge on Alexander for her father's death. She raises an army and attacks Alexander, but is defeated. An army from Mazandaran is recruited for her service and she defeats Alexander. Another battle ends in her defeat and she crosses the Euphrates and heads for Aleppo.

Chap. 18. Burān Dokht captures Aleppo and seizes Alexander's treasure caravan.

Chap. 19. She and Alexander battle several times between Baghdad and Aleppo, then they campaign in Fars. She is forced to take refuge in a cave. Alexander returns to Aleppo and Burān Dokht sets out in pursuit.

(End of Volume I)

Volume II

Chap. 20. Alexander and Burān Dokht meet but he does not recognize her. She dresses as a man and attends a feast with him. A letter comes for Alexander from Anṭuṭiyya, a princess of the Maghreb, saying that she wants to fight for him, that she will marry him and give him the kingdom of the Maghreb because her father has died. Milād, a courtier of Alexander's, discovers Burān Dokht's identity, and secretly advises her to leave quickly.

Chap. 21. She leaves but returns. A messenger reports that reinforcements are on the way for Alexander, and he and Burān Dokht (in disguise) set out for Aleppo.

Chap. 22. When they reach there, Burān Dokht fights on Alexander's side but secretly stays in contact with her forces within the city. Anṭuṭiyya falls in love with her, thinking she is a man. Later Burān Dokht rides out of Aleppo as herself and defeats Alexander in battle. She captures Anṭuṭiyya and reveals her identity. Anṭuṭiyya

refuses to believe her and insists that they marry. Burān Dokht, still pretending that she is a man, marries Anṭuṭiyya but puts off consumation until she is master of Iran and Rum.

Chap. 23. Alexander returns to Istakhr to find it in Persian hands. Burān Dokht and Anṭuṭiyya arrive and fight several battles with Alexander. Anṭuṭiyya flees to the mountains and Burān Dokht follows her. Alexander surprises them bathing naked in a stream, and Burān Dokht gives up fighting him. She seats him on the throne and hails him king.

Chap. 24. After three years of celebration, Alexander leaves the throne to Burān Dokht and marches off to the east with an army. He has difficulties in the Lut where he loses most of his men. He writes to Burān Dokht in Istakhr to send another army, otherwise he will not be able to go to India. She sends an army and Alexander does his best to make Sistan prosperous. He writes to King Keyd of India who is in Kabul, saying that he is not going to India for treasure but for the Moslem religion (man az baḥr-e din-e moselmāni āmada-am).

Chap. 25. Keyd goes in disguise to Alexander and answers his letter. He and Alexander discuss many things, and Alexander lets Keyd return to Kabul. Keyd writes to Fur (Porus) to send an army. They fight several battles near the Ganges, and finally Alexander is defeated and flees to Kabul. He writes to Burān Dokht to join him with another

army.

Chap. 26. She hurries to Kabul, and Aristotle and Ptolemy arrive from Rum with more troops. She fights a number of battles and captures Keyd. He dies of grief, and Burān Dokht moves against Fur and captures him. He escapes, assembles his army again, and returns to battle. Alexander is captured but Burān Dokht rescues him. The Indians fight riding on cows and elephants, so Burān Dokht practices riding on a cow but is captured by the Indians. She kills her captor and escapes, wounded. A river carries her to safety. An Indian sage teaches Alexander how to build statues out of brass and copper which will be heated and sent into battle against the enemy elephants.

A quarrel develops between Aristotle and the Indian sage over who is the wiser, and the Indian sage goes off and sulks. They build the brass statues and defeat Fur's elephants with them. Alexander kills Fur and leads his troops to victory. He converts the Indian nobles and destroys Fur's city.

Chap. 27. In destroying the city Alexander opens a hole in the ground and a host of snakes comes out. Only the Indian sage can make them return by chanting a magic spell. Alexander and his army then set out for Sarandib, but on the way they stop to destroy a castle full of magicians. They find a lake full of fish which respond to the farr which Burān Dokht possesses. After forty days they reach a city of very tall men, where a huge bird comes

and carries off an elephant. They march east for three months and reach a sea of quicksand and foam. They are attacked by cannibals but Burān Dokht drives them away and her army destroys their city. They continue over land and water to another city where there is a miraculous tree planted by Eve. They conquer this city and set sail again.

Chap. 28. They meet a wizened old man whom Aristotle identifies as a former student of Plato's. He defeats all the sages in an astralobe contest, and Alexander takes him along to Adam's tomb. After a pilgrimage, they set sail again in sixteen thousand ships, passing through another sea of foam which kills all the animals. On reaching shore they rig carts with sails and sail overland, covering five hundred farsangs in two days. They reach a hot valley with a people who worship thunder, where Alexander foils a plot and conquers them. They sail off in the carts again and reach a Red Sea, landing on an island full of hermaphrodites. Their leader is a red-haired woman who is the daughter of Dārāb and a Greek woman, thus being Alexander's half sister and Burān Dokht's aunt. The Sagsārs (dog-headed people) attack and carry off Burān Dokht.

Chap. 29. Alexander sets out after Burān Dokht and on the way a sage discovers Plato asleep in a tree. Plato sends him away and the mountain where he is catches fire. Plato jumps into the sea and swims for two days until they finally catch him. They rescue Burān Dokht and con-

vert the Sagsārs, thus restoring them to human form. They sail across the desert again and find a city of women, where they army fraternizes while Plato conducts scientific experiments. Alexander takes their queen with him and sails away over land and sea to an island which is actually the back of a huge fish. His men build fires and the fish sounds, drowning many.

They approach a dangerous strait and Plato says that the only thing they can do is have faith in God (tavakkol). They reach an island full of snakes and Plato becomes jealous and vindictive because he does not know how to control the snakes, while one of the Indian sages does. Plato sulks but later returns. Alexander dams the strait and floods Greece for five hundred years.

Chap. 30. They sail away and call at islands until they reach a land of blacks with whom they have a number of battles. Loqmān arrives and gives advice. Alexander disregards Plato's advice to head for Mecca, and sails for Zangbār. They meet a hostile fleet and Burān Dokht is captured. She is rescued, and Alexander sails to another island and discovers that it is Mt. Qāf. Loqmān comes with advice and Alexander sails away.

Chap. 31. Alexander rescues a youth who was being pursued by hostile paris. In return for the youth, Alexander will fight the paris' enemies, the divs. The divs capture Alexander and carry him off to Mt. Qāf, where Khezr and Elyās greet him. He is given a lecture, then

returned to his army. With some magic dust he defeats the divs. He and his men sail away in large turtle shells to an island of monkeys, survive this and an island of sorcerers, and finally set sail to reach Yemen.

Chap. 32. Alexander converts the people on the coast of Yemen, then captures the king and converts him. They set out for Mecca and settle a dispute there over the chieftainship of the city. After nine years at sea, Alexander's troops want to go home, so he heads for Baghdad. From there he sends Burān Dokht back to Iran with the treasure and many of his troops accompany her.

Chap. 33. Alexander raises another army and sets out for the West, with Loqmān, Khezr, and Elyās with him. He subdues and converts the king of Egypt, and builds a bridge over the Nile. Plato builds a tower so tall that Rum can be seen from the top of it. They sail on, passing twin cities which alternately rise and sink into the sea every day. From there they reach a large tree full of spiders. They fight the spiders and in the end destroy the tree with fire. After escaping from quicksand, Alexander and his men reach a prosperous city and there are told a long rambling tale by an old man. Alexander drowns some evil-doers, converts the rest and moves on to several other cities, all of which he conquers. They meet devāl-pās, bird- and wolf-headed men, with eyes in the back of their heads, miraculous trees, and the simorgh. They reach the end of the world and the Green Sea, which Al-

exander explores in a kind of glass-bottomed boat. From there he goes to build the wall of Yājuj and Mājuj, and proceeds to the land of darkness. A guardian angel takes him to Mt. Qāf again. Kheẓr and Elyās drink the water of life but Alexander can not find it. They leave the darkness and return in the direction of Jerusalem. As he nears Jerusalem, the animals come out and pay him homage. He converts some more cities, then writes his will and builds a golden coffin with holes for his arms.

Alexander places himself on view for three days, then dies. They bury him in the coffin with his arms hanging out, symbolizing his leaving the world empty-handed. Burān Dokht dies in Iran a year later. The story ends with the moral that the world is not to be depended upon.

Eskandar Nāma

Chap. 1. Dārāb b. Dārāb has ruled Iran for fourteen years and has received an annual tribute from Rum. Dārāb marries the daughter of Feylaqus, the Qaysar of Rum, but spends only one night with her because she has an unpleasant breath. He sends her back to her father pregnant. She gives birth to Alexander and he is claimed by Feylaqus as his own son. He is also identified with Zu al-Qarneyn. Dārāb once again demands the tribute, which had ceased being sent after the girl had been sent back. Alexander, who has grown up, refuses to send it and declares war.

Chap. 2. Alexander writes to Dārāb asking that there be no war, but Dārāb insists. They battle and Dārāb flees in defeat to Kerman. Alexander captures Dārāb's wife and mother and spends a year in Iran. Dārāb returns from Kerman to fight again and is defeated a second time. He is stabbed by two treacherous officers. In the death scene, Dārāb learns that he and Alexander are half-brothers. He makes certain last requests of Alexander, then dies and is buried. His wife Roxanne is pregnant but dies giving birth to a daughter. Alexander goes to Kerman, thence to the sea and sails for 'Omān.

Chap. 3. When Alexander reaches 'Omān, the king and the people there are frightened of him and send him tribute. A letter arrives from Porus of India instructing

the king of 'Omān either to repel Alexander or capture him. The king disobeys and Alexander sets out to fight Porus. Porus closes up his city in anticipation of Alexander's attack.

Chap. 4. Alexander goes to Porus in disguise as an ambassador, but Porus recognizes him. He escapes. Alexander defeats Porus' army, captures him, and later kills him. He gains Porus' treasure, marries his daughter Nāhid, and marches to Kashmir.

Chap. 5. Alexander arrives in Kashmir and desires Māh Āfarin, the daughter of Āzād Bakht, the local king. Āzād Bakht will send his daughter to Alexander to poison him. Aristotle is now Alexander's chief advisor and vizier. The girl arrives and the other women of Alexander's harem are jealous of her and plot against her. Alexander uncovers the plot.

Chap. 6. Āzād Bakht, fearing Alexander, sends a woman to plot with his wife Nāhid against him. Nāhid cooperates and brings Alexander a poisoned drink, but divine intervention makes it fall from his hand, and he seizes her. Later he pardons her. He frees Āzād Bakht's brother from prison and installs him as king. Āzād Bakht is expelled in poverty.

Chap. 7. Alexander now marches to Sarandib, the capital of Keyd, king of India. He goes to Keyd in disguise as an ambassador, and enters Keyd's service as an 'ayyār. Still in disguise, Alexander marries Keyd's daughter.

Keyd later suspects a trick and Alexander returns to his own army. After fighting, he captures Keyd, pardons him and re-installs him as king of India. Alexander sets out for a pilgrimage to Adam's tomb.

Chap. 8. He pays a short visit to the tomb of Adam and sees some of the local sights. Then he sets sail with his army in many ships but a storm drives them to an island on which is a mountain. They climb this and on the other side find a land full of gold which they gather, but a swarm of bees kills those gathering the gold. They fight off the bees, and a group of strange men appear, descendants of Zāḥāk. Alexander's men kill the rest of the bees and sail to another island.

Chap. 9. They reach the island of the devāl-pās, whom Alexander destroys by burning their forest. They sail again and reach India. Alexander revisits the tomb of Adam and King Keyd, then sets out for Kashmir by sea. Leaving Kashmir, they return to 'Omān and Mecca.

Chap. 10. Alexander makes the pilgrimage, then settles a jurisdictional dispute over the chieftainship of Mecca. He leaves for Yemen.

Chap. 11. Alexander goes to the king of Yemen in disguise as a spy. He sends all his women back to his mother in Rum. The princess of Yemen falls in love with Alexander. The next day Alexander and the king meet and he seizes both the king and his daughter. He re-installs the king on his throne, but the king is unwilling to give

up his daughter. Alexander captures the city, plunders it, and seizes the girl. They marry and depart for Egypt.

Chap. 12. The Egyptian king comes to Alexander disguised as a messenger. This king has seized the daughters of all his subjects and the people are in despair. The chief of the city, an irate father, comes to Alexander for help. He reveals to Alexander the king's trick. Alexander exposes the king publicly, then sets him free. They battle and during a truce an Egyptian tries to poison Alexander. Through divine intervention the man himself eats the poisoned food and dies. In the next battle Alexander defeats the Egyptians. The people rise up and kill the king. Two Egyptian princesses plot revenge on Alexander for the death of their father. Alexander unearths the plot.

Chap. 13. Alexander's vizier has not carried out his order to kill the two Egyptian princesses, and Alexander learns of this. He kills the vizier and one princess.

Chap. 14. The chief of the city is also a storyteller, and he tells Alexander two long tales. Alexander marries the Egyptian princess whom he spared, and sets out for the West.

Chap. 15. Alexander reaches Spain (Andalos) where Queen Candace reigns. He goes to her in disguise as a messenger. She recognizes him from a portrait which she has had painted previously, shames him in public and orders him out. Later they are reconciled and she promises to marry him. Alexander leaves her kingdom and sets out

for the darkness. Khezr appears and Alexander makes him the head of his army. Together they will go to the darkness.

Chap. 16. They stop in several strange cities, finally entering the darkness. Khezr finds and drinks the water of life. He returns for Alexander and together they search for it but can not find it; Alexander thus is denied immortality. They emerge from the darkness to Mt. Qāf, where Alexander sees Ezrāfil. A voice tells him to go back. They reach a shore infested with serpents and build boats to sail away but can not find a guide.

Chap. 17. They are in a land of snakes and scorpions. Alexander meets an old man who claims to have known several prophets. He gives Alexander protective medicine and teaches him thirty names of God. They sail away and encounter a huge fish which Alexander makes speak with him by using the names of God. They land on the shore near Māchin.

Chap. 18. They reach a city of Turks which has a hostile king. Alexander captures him, then sets him free. He finds a dagger with huge grains of wheat in the handle.

Chap. 19. Alexander interviews a group of extremely old men and learns that the wheat dates from the reign of Key Khosrow.

Chap. 20. Alexander finds a cell in the hills where two monks dwell. They make advances to a princess who rejects them and escapes. They accuse her falsely before

the king. The king questions them and their testimony is inconsistent, so he condemns them and they are burned at the stake.

Chap. 21. Alexander marries the princess of the previous chapter and sets off to fight the Kipchak.

Chap. 22. He proceeds to Siāvush Gerd and visits the grave of Siāvush. He captures the city and kills the king in revenge for the death of Siāvush, then continues on to Afrāsiyāb's city. He is now within the territory of the Khāqān of Chin, whose wife is Alexander's aunt. The Khāqān orders her to have Alexander poisoned. Alexander captures the Ru' in Dezh and sets out for where the sun rises.

Chap. 23. En route he encounters a people who seem to represent the Khazars. He proceeds to a city where all the inhabitants are blind.

Chap. 24. Alexander goes to the Khāqān disguised as a messenger, and spends the night there. His aunt plots against him but a slave girl warns him. Alexander captures the Khāqān and kills him. The women continue plotting.

Chap. 25. In an attempt to assassinate Alexander the aunt fails and is killed.

Chap. 26. The Khāqān's two sons plot against Alexander and try to have a groom poison him. The groom reveals the plot and Alexander kills him. He also kills one son and installs the other as the new Khāqān. Here follows a long catechetical section where Alexander questions

some angels about the end of the world and the day of resurrection. He sails away to the land of Tamghāj.

Chap. 27. Alexander goes to the king of Tamghāj in disguise and finds to his amazement that the king has never heard of him. The king honors Alexander and tells him of the lands of the divs and paris which lie ahead, giving him protective charms. Alexander sets out and reaches a city where a man disguised as a woman rules. He passes thence to a city whose inhabitants are bothered by cannibalistic divs, whom Alexander drives away.

Chap. 28. Alexander reaches a city of divs and is afraid to enter it as a messenger. Each night he draws a magic circle around his camp to protect his army from the divs. The divs send a messenger, and Alexander demands retribution from them for all the people they have eaten. He attacks the city and frees a group of foreign prisoners. The divs summon seventy wizards from Rum but they are powerless against Alexander's magic circle. The wizards recognize Alexander and hand the city over to him. He destroys the city and kills all the divs, then sets out for the land of the paris.

Chap. 29. Alexander finds himself in a desert with no water and his army becomes thirsty. They find a well but can not raise any water because the rope keeps breaking. A man is sent down to investigate and finds two huge Zangis holding captive a beautiful girl. Alexander begins to dig and the Zangis appear with the girl. He

kills the Zangis and builds a monument there.

Chap. 30. Alexander reaches the top of a mountain and finds a monk in a cell. He receives advice from the monk and marries the girl whom he has just rescued. They continue on their way.

Chap. 31. Alexander camps in the land of the paris. They send a messenger but Alexander will not go to their queen. The paris attack at night and carry off Aristotle and some of Alexander's women, for he has forgotten to draw the magic line. After a battle the queen of the paris kidnaps Alexander in his sleep. He escapes and scores a victory over the paris, but the queen plots against him. Reinforcements arrive for the paris, Alexander breaks a ring of magic fire placed around him by the paris and their allies the divs.

Chap. 32. More reinforcements are called for the paris, who kidnap Alexander again. He kills several of them including a dangerous witch, then he is returned to his camp by friendly paris.

Chap. 33. The queen of the paris has a wise old uncle who blames her for all the trouble which has come to them. He goes to Alexander and advises him to leave quietly before things get any worse. Alexander refuses because this land was given to the paris by Afrāsiyāb and he must conquer it. The queen fails in another attempt to kidnap Alexander. The reinforcements arrive and there is a battle. She comes to Alexander and he warns her to

leave the country with her army after which he scores a major victory and captures the queen. He makes the land prosperous, then sets out to fight the Rus.

Chap. 34. He conquers the Rus and captures their city. A wonderful animal appears in Alexander's court and leads him to a lake where he finds a trunk containing a beautiful girl. She is a princess of Turkestan and has been captured by the Zangis to be the bride of their king. Alexander brings her back to his camp and marries her, to the jealousy of the pari queen. They move on to camp near the Zangi castle.

Chap. 35. The Zangi king sends two messengers to Alexander and he kills them both. They battle many times and the Zangi king demands the return of his prospective bride.

Chap. 36. The war continues. The Zangis ask for peace but Alexander refuses.

Chap. 37. Reinforcements for the Zangi king arrive, commanded by the king's brother. Alexander kills the brother.

Chap. 38. Alexander has a guardian angel who tells him to be patient and keep fighting until he kills all the Zangis. He has to quell discontent within the army over what they think is immoral behavior on the part of the queen of the paris.

Chap. 39. A Zangi defector fights for Alexander and causes worry in the Zangi army. The pari queen fights in

single combat and kills forty Zangi heroes. They call for reinforcements and Alexander divides his army into four to fight on different fronts.

Chap. 40. Alexander captures a local prince allied with the Zangis, and he defects to Alexander. His sister is the princess whom Alexander found in the trunk. Brother and sister are reunited after a long separation.

Chap. 41. The guardian angel tells Alexander that ultimately he will be victorious and that he will remain there for five months more. Alexander fights in single combat and has to be rescued by the queen of the paris. During a battle the paris magically close the gate of the Zangi castle. Alexander defeats them and captures the Zangi king and his castle. He will not convert to Islam so Alexander kills him.

Chap. 42. A local Turkish king attacks Alexander with the help of more Zangis who have arrived from a distant land, but he defeats them. Khezr and Elyās appear to warn Alexander of the coming of more Zangi troops. Aristotle has led a force out against some Turks and has been captured. The pari queen rescues Aristotle and drives off the enemy. Alexander repels another Zangi attack with the help of paris.

Chap. 43. The same local Turkish king has a handsome son whom the pari queen desires. The king knows this and will try to induce the queen to betray Alexander in exchange for the son. His messengers reach the queen and

she is of two minds. Alexander is informed of the plot and acts quickly by killing one messenger, tying up the other two and seizing the queen. He chains her in a pit and bribes a messenger to report the queen's assent to the Turkish king.

Chap. 44. The son arrives with a force to take the queen. Alexander kills all the soldiers and captures the prince. The queen's status has fallen and she becomes jealous of her rival, a Turkish princess. She will have Aristotle intercede for her.

Chap. 45. The queen's intrigue becomes more complicated and the secret leaks out. Aristotle recommends death for her, and has trouble calming the army. Alexander is torn between his love for the queen and his honor as a king. The Zangis succeed in capturing the castle by entering through a tunnel, and they carry off the queen.

Chap. 46. Some paris free the queen who then attacks the Zangis and kills her suitor. Alexander is satisfied and they are reconciled.

Chap. 47. The queen's rival is now jealous of her return to Alexander's affections and plots to kill them both. Three servants are sent to poison Alexander but by divine intervention they themselves eat the poison and die. A second poisoning attempt is foiled and Alexander kills all the plotters and puts the disloyal princess in chains.

Chap. 48. Alexander poisons the princess and sends her back to her father in a trunk.

Chap. 49. Alexander attacks the Turkish king and captures him.

Chap. 50. Another local king plans to attack Alexander. His messenger promises Alexander that he will deliver the king to him. Instead the king attacks and captures Alexander and all his men.

Chap. 51. One of the nobles has secretly taken Alexander away for protection. The queen sends out paris to find Alexander but they are unable to discover where he is hidden. Both armies are perplexed. Alexander marries the daughter of the noble who is sheltering him. The pa-ri queen battles the local king and wounds him. With the help of paris Alexander escapes, and the king seizes the treacherous noble.

Chap. 52. Civil war breaks out in the kingdom and Alexander's captured men are set free. A fleet of Zangi ships arrives. Alexander, with divine help, fights a battle with his army walking on the water, while the pari queen and her force fight from the air.

Chap. 53. Alexander converts some of the enemy Turks, who then fight for him and drive off the rest of the Turks. The pari queen is fighting the Zangis at the water when the Turkish king attacks her from behind. She shows him her face, and the beauty of it makes him go weak. He falls from his horse and all the Turks flee. Alexander's guardian angel comes to him again.

Chap. 54. The two local Turkish kings now fight each

other.

Chap. 55. The queen of the paris attacks and captures the victorious Turkish king. Alexander and the queen repel an attack by the Zangis.

Chap. 56. A people called Pil gushān have come to attack Alexander. The queen drives them back with fire. Now the queen is tempted by the other Turkish king, and argues violently with Aristotle. The guardian angel tells Alexander to send the queen away. Alexander intercepts a message from the Turk to the queen, but the guardian angel tells him not to divorce her. She retreats to a hermit's cell to await events.

Chap. 57. As a result of the queen's bad actions the paris have been deprived by God of their power to fly. In battle with the enemy, Alexander defeats the queen fighting in disguise and puts her in chains. Alexander now marries the hermit girl with whom the queen took refuge. This inspires remorse in the queen and she and Alexander are reconciled. The queen is kidnapped by a sorcerer working for the enemy.

Chap. 58. Alexander goes hunting and is captured by the Turkish king. The queen rescues him. A large enemy force defects to Alexander. The guardian angel tells Alexander that it will all be over in a few days.

Chap. 59. In battle the queen captures the Turkish king and kills him. The Turks surrender the city to Alexander, who is eager to leave for where the sun rises. Divine word tells him to wait, and before long another pari queen arrives with a huge army to fight him.

Chap. 60. Fairy queens have an eye for men, and this new arrival has in mind not killing Alexander but just possessing him. In battle Alexander's queen defeats the other queen's army. He kills many paris, and the rest flee. The enemy queen escapes.

Firuz Shāh Nāma I

Chap. 1. Dārāb ibn Bahman ibn Esfandyār is king of Iran, and his viziers are Rowshan Rāy and Teytus-e Ḥakim. Dārāb is childless and wants a son to succeed him. The king of Barbar has a marriageable daughter, so Dārāb sends Teytus to ask for her. Teytus answers three questions correctly, and is given the girl to take back to Iran. Dārāb marries her and on their wedding night she becomes pregnant. On the same night the wife of Pil Zur, a hero of the court, becomes pregnant, and their sons are born the same day. Dārāb's son is named Firuz Shāh and Pil Zur's son is called Farrokh Zād. Firuz Shāh's horoscope shows that he will be brave and powerful, that he will fall in love young, and undertake a long journey. He will gain his beloved, rule the world, and he will have a son who will also be a world conqueror. A hero is sent from Barbar to train Firuz Shāh. En route he meets a woman carrying a child which had been fathered by a ghul. He brings them to Dārāb who names the boy Behruz. The three boys grow up together.

Chap. 2. Firuz Shāh dreams of 'Ayn al-Ḥayāt, princess of Yemen, and falls in love. An artist will take portraits of him to Yemen and contrive to have her see them and fall in love. Later Firuz Shāh decides to go to Yemen himself, and sets out with Farrokh Zād.

In Yemen, the artist enters the court with a group

of suitors from neighboring lands. They are all rejected. He leaves three portraits in 'Ayn al-Ḥayāt's garden, enamours her of Firuz Shāh, and returns to Iran.

Farrokh Zād is wounded and separated from Firuz Shāh during a battle. Firuz Shāh and the others set sail for Yemen.

Chap. 3. Farrokh Zād is found by a shepherd who takes him to a caravanserai near a town. He recovers and is adopted by a local merchant. He defeats an itinerant bowman in a contest, and the king's daughter falls in love with him. Farrokh Zād decides to marry the princess and remain there.

Chap. 4. Firuz Shāh's ship is attacked by pirates. They defeat the pirates, weather a storm and encounter a whirlpool. When they reach Yemen, Firuz Shāh poses as the slave of the merchant with whom he is sailing.

The prince of Kashmir, a rejected suitor, allies himself with a Zangi king and prepares to attack Yemen.

Firuz Shāh and the merchants set out for the capital. They arrive in time for Firuz Shāh to save the day for the Yemenis in a battle with the Zangis. Farrokh Zād is in the Yemeni army and recognizes Firuz Shāh disguised as a slave.

Chap. 5. 'Ayn al-Ḥayāt wants to see Firuz Shāh, so she and her maid set out over the palace roofs at night. She visits him three times, then one night he decides to visit her. He and Farrokh Zād are captured by the palace

guard. The king imprisons them until Firuz Shāh's identity is established.

Chap. 6. The Zangi king, whose son was killed in battle by Firuz Shāh, attacks Yemen. King Sarvar of Yemen buys off the Zangis by sending them the two prisoners, Firuz Shāh and Farrokh Zād. They are taken to the Zangis' island to be executed, but are spared by the queen and sent to prison on another island. There the jailor takes pity on them.

Chap. 7. Dārāb misses Firuz Shāh, and sends Behruz to Yemen for news. The artist accompanies him. They reach Yemen and meet 'Ayn al-Ḥayāt, who gives them the news of Firuz Shāh. The artist returns to Iran while Behruz continues on to the Zangi islands.

Chap. 8. The Zangi king has a prophetic dream and sets out to kill Firuz Shāh and Farrokh Zād. Meanwhile the jailor has freed them and when the king arrives, they kill him. Firuz Shāh plans to attack a nearby island, but a spy has informed the local king and he sends for a sorceress to help him. She carries off Firuz Shāh, and Farrokh Zād finishes the battle by killing the king and routing his army.

Behruz leaves Yemen for the Zangi islands. His ship is blown off course and is attacked by cannibals. They survive this and sail on, reaching the sorceress's island. The sorceress falls in love with Behruz and enchants him. Having heard Firuz Shāh's call from prison, Behruz dis-

covers the key and opens the prison, but can not free Firuz Shāh because he is bound by a magic hair. He learns the secret of the magic, rescues Firuz Shāh and together they kill the sorceress. They rescue Farrokh Zād and sail away. As they approach Yemen, they are caught in a storm and have a close call with some fire worshipping cannibals.

Chap. 9. The artist reports back to Dārāb, who decides to attack Yemen and save Firuz Shāh. He marches toward Yemen, summoning local armies along the way. Dārāb avoids Mecca and attacks Yemen. The Yemenis ask for a truce, and secretly request more troops. The Persians discover the truth and attack. Both sides now await reinforcements.

Chap. 10. Dārāb warns Sarvar, king of Yemen, against further resistance, but Sarvar declares that he will fight to the end. They battle for days, then an army of Zangis led by the father of another rejected suitor, reaches Yemen, intent on attacking Sarvar. Sarvar convinces the Zangi that Firuz Shāh killed his son, and persuades him to attack the Persians. Several Persian warriors are captured by the Zangi king and turned over to the Yemenis.

Chap. 11. Sarvar sends the prisoners to a castle for safekeeping. Behruz reports this to Firuz Shāh who has returned to Yemen from the islands. He and Farrokh Zād free the warriors from the castle. A spy reports to Dārāb that Firuz Shāh is near at hand. The Persians and the Yemenis fight for several days and just as the tide

is turning against the Persians, Firuz Shāh arrives with an army. He and Dārāb meet, and send a peace offer to Sarvar. He does not accept. Firuz Shāh takes the field and kills the Zangi king. After a fierce battle the Yemenis are routed.

Chap. 12. The Yemenis flee to Ta'izz. A seige begins, and the Persians cross the moat. Sarvar asks for a forty-day cease-fire, and secretly sends to Valid ibn Khāied, the king of Egypt, for help. He pledges his daughter 'Ayn al-Ḥayāt in return for an army. The prince of Egypt, Ṣāleḥ, has gone mad for love of 'Ayn al-Ḥayāt and has been kept in chains for years. A hundred thousand men leave Egypt for Yemen, and the fighting begins anew. Finally the Persians are victorious and the Yemenis plan to flee to Egypt and take 'Ayn al-Ḥayāt with them. They send her ahead with a small force. Khorshid Shāh and Farrokh Zād are captured trying to rescue her. The Persians capture the chief Yemeni 'ayyār, Helāl, and Behruz sets out to free Khorshid Shāh and Farrokh Zād.

Chap. 13. Dārāb captures Ta'izz, and the Egyptians and Sarvar retreat to Ṭāif. The princess of Ṭāif has fallen in love with Khorshid Shāh. She goes over the roofs to visit him and arrives there at the same time as Behruz who has come to free the prisoners. They arm themselves from the king's armory and flee on horseback. The princess of Ṭāif delivers the city to the Persians. Sarvar attacks but Dārāb comes from behind and forces him to flee.

He passes Mecca and Medina and reaches Egypt. Dārāb sends to Iran for more troops while Valid ibn Khāled of Egypt organizes an army there. 'Ayn al-Ḥayāt is taken to the palace and housed with the princess of Egypt, Turān Dokht.

Chap. 14. Dārāb writes to Valid ibn Khāled to send back 'Ayn al-Ḥayāt or face the consequences, but Valid refuses. From Iran arrive Moẓaffar Shāh and Farrokh Zād's brother Behzād. Firuz Shāh goes in disguise to the Egyptian court to size up the Egyptian army. While he is there, an Egyptian 'ayyār brings in Moẓaffar Shāh whom he has kidnapped. Valid ibn Khāled is about to execute him when Firuz Shāh leaps out, kills the executioner and flees. The enemy is unable to take him and he reaches Dārāb's camp safely. Moẓaffar Shāh is thrown into prison. Dārāb moves his army up and there is a battle the next day. By accident Behzād and Farrokh Zād fight each other and in view of Firuz Shāh, Farrokh Zād is unhorsed. He feels shamed and wants revenge on his brother.

Turān Dokht, princess of Egypt, has fallen in love with Moẓaffar Shāh. She bribes a jailor to free him and brings him to the harem. They spend some time together, then he is recaptured and put back in prison. Firuz Shāh hears about these adventures and will go himself to visit 'Ayn al-Ḥayāt. He enters the palace at night and crosses the roofs to find her. They meet and spend two days together, then Firuz Shāh gets drunk and decides to rescue Moẓaffar Shāh. He has a fight with the night

watch, and a friendly butcher gives him and Behruz shelter.

An Egyptian ṣayyār defects to the Persians, and with two Persian ṣayyārs he returns to the city to rescue Moẓaffar Shāh. Firuz Shāh and Behruz start off to do the same thing and all five meet at the prison. They rescue the prisoner and rest for a day in the house of the butcher. Firuz Shāh returns to the battlefield. Prisoners are exchanged, and the fighting continues.

Chap. 15. A powerful magician named Moqanṭara lives in a distant land, and Valid ibn Khāled sends his vizier Nik Andish to seek the magician's help against the Persians. Nik Andish reaches the cave where Moqanṭara lives and is brought before the wizard. Moqanṭara agrees to help, and they fly off to Egypt in a magic jar. King Valid ibn Khāled and King Sarvar are making battle plans when the magician arrives. The next day in battle the magician makes off with forty of the Persian heroes, including Firuz Shāh and Farrokh Zād. On the following days the magician returns in different guises and carries off many more Persians.

Persian spies learn where the magician lives, and steal a charm which he had given to Nik Andish. With the intention of freeing the warriors, they enter the magician's cave using the charm. The warriors are bound by magic hairs as before, but the charm breaks the spell. After killing the sorcerer's assistants, they destroy the magical power of Moqanṭara and take him in chains to Dārāb.

Chap. 16. The fighting continues until the Persians capture the Egyptian flag. After this the supporting armies of the Egyptians flee, and they themselves take refuge in the city.

Jamshid Shāh, a Persian general, sets out to capture Alexandria. Another force heads for Malatya, while Dārāb besieges the Egyptians in their city.

Chap. 17. Eskandar Shāh, king of Alexandria, has a daughter Gol Andām, whom Jamshid Shāh captures one day while hunting near Alexandria. They fall in love and she promises to hand over the city to him. Eskandar Shāh is holding Khorshid Shāh prisoner in the city, and Jamshid Shāh sends an ‘ayyār in at night to rescue him, with the help of Gol Andām. As Jamshid Shāh storms the gate the next day, Gol Andām opens it from the inside, and Jamshid Shāh captures the king and his vizier Bakhtyār.

Gol Andām describes an enchanted island off the coast of Alexandria which is said to contain a great treasure. Jamshid Shāh decides to find the treasure and sails for the island. His ship is caught in a whirlpool and doomed to circle the island forever unless he is rescued. Firuz Shāh learns from a treasure map that he is the only one who can break the spell and find the treasure. Firuz Shāh investigates a mysterious tomb outside Alexandria, and there finds the means to break the spell. He sails to the island, defeats the guardian jinn, rescues Jamshid Shāh and returns to Dārāb with the treasure.

Chap. 18. In Egypt, the Persians capture an Egyptian spy who had come out of the city through a tunnel. He leads Firuz Shāh into the city where he captures Valid ibn Khāled and opens the gates to the Persians. Sarvar flees to Malatya, and ʿAyn al-Ḥayāt and Turān Dokht leave the harem and meet Firuz Shāh and Moẓaffar Shāh. Dārāb receives the princesses, and just as everything becomes peaceful a message arrives saying that Alexandria has been invaded from Cyprus and conquered.

Firuz Shāh will march to Alexandria, and Moẓaffar Shāh will attack Damascus. King Sarvar, who has fled to Malatya, finds that it is pro-Persian, so he changes his plan and marches to Kayseri. There he finds protection with King ʿAṣtur, whose son Shāh Nush is also in love with ʿAyn al-Ḥayāt.

An Egyptian ʿayyār, Helāl, returns from Kayseri to Egypt to rescue Valid ibn Khāled and ʿAyn al-Ḥayāt. He carries them both off in sacks and heads for Malatya.

Firuz Shāh reaches Alexandria, which has been razed, and sets sail for Cyprus. After military difficulties he kills the Frankish king there and captures his city. Firuz Shāh wants the king's daughter to marry her cousin whom he will install as king, but the girl will accept the cousin only after he has conquered a fierce people who dwell in a castle in the sea. Firuz Shāh will help him, and they sail off to the castle. Firuz Shāh captures it and sails back toward Cyprus, but a storm blows

them off their course. They approach an island with a bright red castle. There is a spell there which only Firuz Shāh can break. They find a didactic inscription and a treasure, then return to Cyprus. The wedding is celebrated and Firuz Shāh returns to Alexandria.

Helāl the ‘Ayyār approaches Malatya and the local king, Sayf al-Dowla, takes the prisoners from him. Helāl proceeds to Kayseri.

A Persian army approaches Aleppo, which has a dissolute king and a wise vizier. The vizier makes it easy for the Persians to capture the city and the king flees to Damascus.

Chap. 19. The Persians attack Damascus and two of their leaders are captured by the Arabs. Armies come from Egypt and Aleppo to support the Persians. The fighting drags on but finally the Arabs are defeated and retire to the city.

Chap. 20. Behzād is persuaded to enter Damascus alone to try to make peace. The Arabs will capture him when he comes in, but a butcher, leader of the javānmardān of Damascus, organizes the people to prevent this. The king's daughter, Gol Buy, is in love with one of the Persian prisoners, Bahman-e Zarrin Qabā, and she helps Behzād as a means of furthering her own ends. A fight starts in the court and the butcher helps Behzād escape to an open square. He holds off the whole army by himself until night when Gol Buy appears in disguise and rescues him.

She takes Behzād to her garden. The butcher and a Persian ‘ayyār begin to dig a tunnel into the prison to rescue the Persians there, while the Persians on the inside begin to tunnel out. They meet mid-way underground and all retire to the butcher's house to await events.

(End of Volume I)

Volume II

Chap. 21. Dārāb, Firuz Shāh and the Persian army reach the gates of Damascus. There is a massive search for Behzād going on in the city, but he is with Gol Buy. As the king reaches Gol Buy's palace, Behzād steals a horse, flees, and joins Behruz, Tāreq and Āshub, the Persian ‘ayyārs. Firuz Shāh enters the city to make peace. By now Gol Buy and Bahman-e Zarrin Qabā have met and become lovers. The vizier Naṣr ibn ‘Adl also loves Gol Buy and he captures the pair of lovers and flees toward Antioch. Dārāb enters the city and captures the king, Masruq. He sends Behruz ahead to Malatya for news.

Chap. 22. The Qeysar of Rum orders that the city of Malatya be captured. His plan is to free Valid ibn Khāled and take ‘Ayn al-Ḥayāt for his own son Shāh Nush. Sayf al-Dowla, king of Malatya, is friendly to the Persians and will not surrender to the Qeysar. Sayf al-Dowla's two brothers turn against him and in a night battle Valid ibn Khāled is rescued. ‘Ayn al-Ḥayāt and the wife of Sayf al-Dowla escape the city through a tunnel and flee to the mountains. Sayf al-Dowla's army is routed and he

is closed out of the city. Valid ibn Khāled sets himself up as king of Malatya. Behruz, Sayf al-Dowla and others join ʿAyn al-Ḥayāt in the mountains. Helāl, the Egyptian ʿayyār, drugs them all and takes them back to the city. Valid ibn Khāled leaves for Kayseri with the prisoners, where he meets Shāh Sarvar. Shāh ʿAṣṭur arrives and demands ʿAyn al-Ḥayāt for Shāh Nush.

Chap. 23. In Antioch, the king is friendly to the Persians and will take the prisoners away from Naṣr ibn ʿAdl. Gol Buy kills Naṣr ibn ʿAdl, then flees to the house of an old woman. The old woman's son informs on Gol Buy and she is captured and taken to the king. The vizier falls in love with her and kills the king to get her. Bahman-e Zarrin Kolāh arrives with an army and will attack the city while the main Persian force marches toward Malatya. Shabrang, a Persian ʿayyār, enters the closed up city through a tunnel and later the Persian army enters through the same tunnel. They kill the drunken courtiers, and the people surrender the city. Bahman-e Zarrin Qabā is rescued.

Chap. 24. The Persians in Antioch set out for Malatya. En route, Gol Buy is snatched away by a mysterious hand which emerges from a hole in the ground. Later Turān Dokht is taken away by a hand which comes down from a cloud. The horoscopes predict that Gol Buy will be rescued by one as yet unborn, the son of Firuz Shāh and ʿAyn al-Ḥayāt. Turān Dokht will be found in a distant

land, so Mozaffar Shāh and Āshub, an ‘ayyār, set off to find her.

Spies report from Kayseri that ‘Ayn al-Ḥayāt and Sayf al-Dowla have been taken to Izmir. The ‘ayyārs go to Izmir while the Persians fight at Malatya. The old rancor between Behzād and Farrokh Zād breaks out again. They fight, Farrokh Zād loses, and escapes on foot. A search fails to locate him. Enemy ‘ayyārs kidnap all the remaining women and take them to Kayseri. Behzād sets out to find Farrokh Zād, and he too disappears. The horoscope predicts that the first to reappear will be Farrokh Zād. Mozaffar Shāh will be the next but Behzād will be found only much later and in a foreign country.

Chap. 25. Behruz and the others are in Kayseri when Sekandar Shāh, Masruq and the rest arrive with the kidnapped women. Shāh Nush wants ‘Ayn al-Ḥayāt at once and sets out for Izmir. The ‘ayyārs reach Izmir and kill Shāh Nush. They rescue ‘Ayn al-Ḥayāt and Sayf al-Dowla but their escape is foiled by a treacherous ferryman. The whole party is captured and taken to Kayseri. With the aid of Ṭāreq, Behruz and ‘Ayn al-Ḥayāt escape. They elude Helāl but an unknown rider appears and carries off ‘Ayn al-Ḥayāt. Behruz and Ṭāreq return to Malatya. Jahān Afruz, a warlike woman, has captured ‘Ayn al-Ḥayāt.

Farrokh Zād wanders about the desert and finds the palace of King Lulāb. He will lead Lulāb's army against the Persians.

Chap. 26. Dārāb and the Rumis fight until a mysterious rider appears and captures several Persian heroes. The next day Firuz Shāh follows the rider, who leads him to the palace where ʿAyn al-Ḥayāt is kept. Meanwhile Farrokh Zād arrives with an army to fight the Persians. The mysterious rider was Jahān Afruz, and she brings Firuz Shāh to ʿAyn al-Ḥayāt. She forces ʿAyn al-Ḥayāt to accept her as a second wife of Firuz Shāh. Firuz Shāh repels an attack on the palace, but later is drugged by a servant of Jahān Afruz, and is hidden in a cellar.

Chap. 27. The Qeysar, while attacking the palace of Jahān Afruz, sees ʿAyn al-Ḥayāt and falls in love with her. Behruz frees Firuz Shāh and the other heroes, and brings an army to their aid. The Qeysar is defeated and flees to Kayseri with the women prisoners. There is a battle at Kayseri and during a truce the Qeysar plans to marry ʿAyn al-Ḥayāt. Farrokh Zād has become remorseful and writes to Firuz Shāh about the Qeysar's plan to marry ʿAyn al-Ḥayāt. When Firuz Shāh attacks the main gate, Farrokh Zād opens it for him from inside. Valid ibn Khāled is killed and the Qeysar, Sarvar and the others flee as Dārāb enters the city. Dārāb wants to return to Iran. He forgives Sarvar, Sekandar Shāh and Masruq, and Sarvar gives ʿAyn al-Ḥayāt to Firuz Shāh.

Chap. 28. Mozaffar Shāh and Āshub travel four months in search of Turān Dokht. The sorceress who holds her captive approaches them and surrounds Mozaffar Shāh with

a ring of magic fire. Āshub seeks aid and finds a monk in a cave on a high mountain. The monk tells him that he must catch a pari and ask her about Turān Dokht. He catches one who tells him that the paris had had Turān Dokht but the sorceress Jandala stole her from them. The pari prepares Āshub and takes him on a long journey. They reach the castle of Jandala and Āshub finds Turān Dokht under a glass dome. He captures Jandala and deprives her of her power. They break the spell of the glass dome and at the same time the magic fire around Moẓaffar Shāh goes out. Moẓaffar Shāh and Turān Dokht are reunited and they all start back toward the Persian army. En route they meet the fleeing army of the Qeysar and an enemy spy captures Moẓaffar Shāh and carries him away to Istanbul. Āshub saves Turān Dokht and takes her to the Persian army at Kayseri.

Chap. 29. Dārāb is called back to Iran to ward off an attack by Kashmiris and Tibetans. Firuz Shāh and five thousand men enter Istanbul disguised as merchants. They capture the city, rescue the prisoners and forgive all the enemy kings. Firuz Shāh returns to Kayseri.

Chap. 30. Some merchants come to Firuz Shāh in Kayseri and ask protection from a band of robbers from a nearby castle. He attacks it but has no success. Behruz and Ṭāreq enter secretly, drug the watchmen and let the rest of the Persians in. They kill the castle keeper and seize a treasure. Behind a locked door at the bottom

of a well Firuz Shāh finds an inscribed tablet left by Tahmuras. They return to Kayseri and everything looks peaceful, but the horoscope predicts trouble ahead. Firuz Shāh, against the advice of his vizier, goes hunting for a few days.

Chap. 31. After hunting for ten days, a strange animal appears to Firuz Shāh. He pursues it to a meadow where it jumps into a spring. A white bird flies out, enchants him and carries him off. The army finds his horse, and the vizier determines from the stars that Firuz Shāh is alive and will return. All the non-Persian allies now revolt and attack the Persians. Helāl captures many of the Persian heroes. Reinforcements arrive for the Persians and they defeat the Rumis.

Chap. 32. Jahān Afruz has been posing as a man, and a girl, Gol Nār, has fallen in love with her. She captures Jahān Afruz, but the local king is informed and he imprisons them both. While Jahān Afruz is on the gallows the king and his vizier fall in love with her. That night she kills the king and flees, but is captured by a general who loves her. He rebels against the Qeysar and defeats him in battle. Jahān Afruz captures a city and marries the general to Gol Nār.

Chap. 33. After wandering for four months, Behzād joins a passing army and goes to their city in the West, at the edge of the sea. Şandalus ibn Akvān-e Div has taken King Āzād Bakht's daughter and given her to a rival

king, Ra'ḍ Āvāz. Şandalus is on the watch for descendants of Rostam, who killed his father. After many captures and rescues, Behzād kills Ra'ḍ Āvāz in battle and seizes the city.

Chap. 34. Behzād sets off alone to find Şandalus. He reaches a magic mountain surrounded by mercury. He is directed by a shepherd to a distant well where he finds a helpful jinn. They break the spell of the mercury and enter the palace where Şandalus lives.

Şandalus arrives. They fight and Behzād cuts off the div's arm. Şandalus disappears. Behzād stays awake for forty days and finally sleeps in a tree. Şandalus returns, uproots the tree and throws it into the sea. Divine intervention saves Behzād, who swims to an island and is soon rescued by a ship. After a storm, cannibals attack the ship. Behzād drives them off but the merchants desert him. With one cannibal as a guide he sails on until a huge fish swallows the boat and the cannibal. Behzād reaches an island where Şandalus keeps his prisoners. He kills the div, frees the captives and together they sail to another island.

Chap. 35. Firuz Shāh awakes in a palace on Mt. Qāf. He remains there a year and falls in love with a pari called Māh Leqā. Civil war breaks out and Firuz Shāh is removed to a cave. Māh Leqā disappears and the local king is victorious.

(End of Volume II)

Qeṣṣa-e Hamza

First Story. The story opens in Madā³en (Ctesiphon), where Qobād-e Shahryār reigns as king of Iran. He and his courtiers are fire worshippers. In the city there is a porter named Bakht-e Jamāl who is a friend of the grand vizier. The portents indicate forty bad days for Bakht-e Jamāl, so he remains indoors. On the fortieth day he walks out with his friend the vizier. Entering a garden to relieve himself he there finds a hidden treasure. The vizier learns of this, and in a fit of greed kills his friend. Before he dies, Bakht-e Jamāl asks that sufficient money be given to his wife to support her. The vizier tells the porter's wife that her husband has joined a caravan to Khwārazm for six months. He then builds himself a splendid palace with the treasure.

Second Story. The widow was pregnant at the time of her husband's death and gives birth to a son whom she names Bozorjmehr. When the boy reaches the proper age he is sent to a teacher who has a book, Jāmās Nāma, which came to him from Bakht-e Jamāl. Nobody has been able to read this book, but Bozorjmehr is a quick learner and is able to read it. The book is a source of all knowledge, and from it he learns that the vizier killed his father. One day he goes to the vizier's garden to gather some greens. He creates a disturbance and the vizier orders his black page to kill him. The page substitutes a sheep's

liver and reports that he has killed Bozorjmehr.

The king has had a dream which he has forgotten, and gives the vizier three days to remember it for him. Bozorjmehr appears and the vizier asks him. The youth will tell only the king. He repeats it correctly, then tells the king that the vizier has killed his father. The king executes the vizier and Bozorjmehr takes his wife. Bozorjmehr is soon made chief vizier. A son is born to the king, and Bozorjmehr instructs the king to name him Nowshiravān. The vizier's widow gives birth to a son whom they name Bakhtak Bakhtyār, and he and Nowshiravān grow up together. When Nowshiravān is twenty-five, Bozorjmehr predicts that his mortal enemy is in Arabia in his mother's womb. Bozorjmehr is sent to Arabia to kill the child.

Third Story. The Arabs learn that Bozorjmehr has come to kill all pregnant women. He assures them that this is not so. Ḥamza ibn ʿAbd al-Moṭṭaleb is born, and at the same time is born ʿOmar Omayya Zomari. Bozorjmehr leaves money for their support and the two boys grow up together.

Fourth Story. Bozorjmehr receives word that Qobād has died and that Nowshiravān is king. He returns to Madāʿen and Bakhtak Bakhtyār makes trouble.

Ḥamza is a headstrong youth and kills a braggart. He also destroys an idol temple, and blames these acts on ʿOmar Omayya. Ḥamza defeats and kills the local wrestling champion.

Fifth Story. Ḥamza uproots a date palm, and in exasperation his father sends him and ʿOmar Omayya to school. Ḥamza goes to learn archery, and is finally satisfied with a bow which had belonged to the prophet Isaac. A messenger from the other world teaches Ḥamza all he needs to know. After killing several horses trying to break them, Ḥamza breaks Isaac's horse in Solomon's garden. He finds weapons and armor of past prophets, and a treasure.

Sixth Story. A brother of Ḥamza will take the annual tax to Yemen, whence it will be sent to Nowshiravān. Ḥamza and ʿOmar follow secretly behind. A prince of Aleppo plunders the caravan, but Ḥamza defeats him, then converts him and all of his army. In Yemen Ḥamza and ʿOmar defend the treasure from the Yemeni army. Ḥamza converts the king and wins his daughter in a contest.

Seventh Story. In a dream Ḥamza sees that Mecca is about to be attacked. He rushes there to find that a local king has plundered Nowshiravān's camp and now wants to plunder Mecca. Ḥamza defeats him. Part of Ḥamza's success in battle is due to his ability to utter a shout so loud that it deafens the enemy and frightens his animals so that they flee in panic.

Eighth Story. An Arab hero, ʿOmar Maʿdi, writes Ḥamza a threatening letter. Ḥamza challenges him and captures him in single combat. Ḥamza converts him and all his many brothers.

Ninth Story. Nowshiravān summons Ḥamza to his court, having heard about his exploits. An officer is sent to

greet Ḥamza but 'Omar Omayya insults him. Ḥamza declares he will not go to Nowshiravān without a letter from Bozorjmehr.

Tenth Story. Bozorjmehr makes a splendid banner for Ḥamza and sends it to him with a letter by the hand of his son Siāvakhsh. On the way to Madā'en Ḥamza kills a dangerous leopard and sends the stuffed skin ahead to Nowshiravān. The king comes out to meet Ḥamza and is envious of his horse. Ḥamza is unwilling to give the king his horse, so he races with a noble, wins and gives the noble's horse to Nowshiravān. The Persian nobles become jealous of Ḥamza's friendship with the king and plot against him.

Eleventh Story. In Nowshiravān's court Ḥamza has been occupying the chair of Qobād Gostaham Zarrin Kafsh. Qobād objects and Ḥamza pummels him at a feast. The courtiers complain to Gostaham who gets drunk and challenges Ḥamza. Ḥamza floors him and four of his sons.

Twelfth Story. Gostaham has captured a dangerous rebel who persuades the heroes to free him in the court. Nobody is able to bind him again after he has caused havoc with his sword. Ḥamza fights him on the field and captures him after a shout. Gostaham's sons kill the prisoner out of shame. Gostaham plans an ambush for Ḥamza the next day while hunting. Ḥamza shouts and Nowshiravān comes to his rescue. Gostaham flees.

Thirteenth Story. Gostaham while fleeing with his sons to Turkestan, joins an army on its way to attack Ḥam-

za. Ḥamza defeats the army, and forgives Gostaham when he throws himself at Ḥamza's feet.

Fourteenth Story. The king, Bozorjmehr, Ḥamza, ʿOmar and Bakhtak Bakhtyār go to the king's private garden to drink wine. Ḥamza goes out to relieve himself, and afterward sits alone by a pool. Nowshiravān's daughter Mehr Negār is secretly in love with Ḥamza. She appears and Ḥamza falls in love with her. That night Ḥamza steals into the women's quarters and the two lovers swear eternal fidelity. The castle guard catches him on his way out and he must flee the city. Gostaham and the army pursue him, but he routs them singlehandedly. He captures three young princes, and Nowshiravān becomes concerned.

Fifteenth Story. Ḥamza sends the princes back to the city with ʿOmar, who gets drunk and starts trouble. He fights Bakhtak Bakhtyār, and the following day he faces Nowshiravān's army. The king forgives him.

Sixteenth Story. A long letter comes to Nowshiravān from Shahyāl of Ceylon, brother of a deposed king, asking for help and warning Nowshiravān that if he does not dethrone Landhur the usurper, that Landhur will surely attack Persia. Nowshiravān will send Ḥamza to Ceylon to settle this, and promises his daughter to Ḥamza in return for Landhur's head. Ḥamza prepares to leave and Gostaham goes secretly ahead with an army. Bozorjmehr, who can predict the future, sews a shāh mohra into Ḥamza's arm while Ḥamza is unconscious. The shāh mohra is an antidote for

poisons which otherwise have no antidote.

Gostaham goes ahead scorching the earth, and sinking all the boats at river crossings. Ḥamza reaches a crossing and learns the truth from an old sailor who agrees to take them to Ceylon by a shorter route than Gostaham's so as to arrive sooner. They stop at an island and a devāl-pā catches Ḥamza. They make the devāl-pās drunk and rid themselves of them, pushing on to Ceylon. They visit the tomb of Adam, see a treasure left by Solomon, and all depart except ʿOmar. ʿOmar has a vision in which four prophets come to him, and each prophet gives him a miraculous gift: great speed of foot, many disguises, a knowledge of languages, and an ever-full food basket.

Ḥamza and the army march to a port where they are forced to battle a local king. Ḥamza defeats and converts him. They reach the capital, and ʿOmar, sent to the court as a messenger, steals the crown from Landhur's head. The next day Landhur and Ḥamza fight, and their combat lasts seventeen days. Eventually Ḥamza shouts, and captures Landhur. Landhur converts.

Seventeenth Story. Gostaham has returned to Ḥamza's favor, although he is plotting secretly against Ḥamza. During the feasting which follows the battle, Ḥamza asks Gostaham to send singing girls. Gostaham sends them with poison and they feed it to Ḥamza. ʿOmar takes Ḥamza and the army into the city for safety and then sets out for a doctor. He must force the doctor to come to Ḥamza for

the doctor knows that the poison is always fatal. Someone remembers the shāh mohra, which cures him in forty days. Ḥamza frees Landhur to pursue Gostaham.

Eighteenth Story. Gostaham has fled to Nowshiravān, falsely reported Ḥamza's death, and fled on to Turkestan. Bakhtak Bakhtyār persuades Nowshiravān to give his daughter to a cousin who loves her. Ḥamza returns to Ctesiphon, and 'Omar arranges that Landhur capture the cousin in question. Nowshiravān meets Ḥamza and temporizes about the daughter. He still demands the head of Landhur.

Nineteenth Story. Now Bakhtak suggests that Ḥamza be sent to collect the tribute from Rum, and writes to the kings there to kill Ḥamza on sight. Ḥamza sets out with another plotting courtier and the army. In a waterless desert the courtier gives Ḥamza poisoned water but Ḥamza's hand shakes and pours it out. Khezr appears and creates a spring for them.

They reach the city of Yunan and prepare for battle with the Greeks. After three days Ḥamza shouts and captures the Greek king. Ḥamza kills the treacherous courtier.

Ḥamza continues on to Rum, where after several days of fighting he captures the king and converts him. From there he goes to Egypt, where the 'Aziz awaits him with poison. Ḥamza and all the nobles are made unconscious and imprisoned. The 'Aziz sends word of this to Nowshiravān, and a friend of Ḥamza's in the court hears it,

rushes to Egypt and frees them all. Ḥamza returns to the court and the ʿAziz is killed. The ʿAziz has a brother with a beautiful daughter, and they persuade Ḥamza to marry her. They conclude the ʿaqd. One night Ḥamza has a nocturnal emission, and cleans himself with a rag which he leaves beside his bed when he goes out to wash. His bride to be arrives with her maid to view Ḥamza at night, finds his bed empty, and lies down in it. She too has a nocturnal emission (sic) and cleans herself with the same rag, which she takes back to her quarters.

Ḥamza returns to Ctesiphon and Gostaham plots to have Nowshiravān's daughter marry someone else.

Twentieth Story. Gostaham and Nowshiravān meet with their armies in the desert outside Ctesiphon, and they prepare for the marriage of the princess to Zubin, a relative. Ḥamza reaches the city, plunders the nobles' houses and ʿOmar takes the daughters of Bakhtak and Gostaham. Ḥamza comes out to battle Zubin. He fights Gostaham unarmed, kills him and all of his sons, and routs his army. The battle lasts two weeks, and Ḥamza fights day and night. Finally Ḥamza, in a frenzy, loses his helmet and takes a blow on the head from Zubin. His horse carries him all the way to Mecca, and ʿOmar rushes there to care for his wounds. Ḥamza's army puts the enemy to flight and returns to Mecca for safety. Nowshiravān's daughter Mehr Negār is in Mecca and tries her hand unsuccessfully at ʿayyāri. ʿOmar rescues her. He then kidnaps the king,

Zubin and Bakhtak and ransoms them for food for the city.

Twenty-first Story. In the Golden City on Mt. Qāf, the divs have conquered the paris and occupied their city. The vizier of the paris predicts that a human will regain their city for them. The paris attract Ḥamza's attention in Mecca and ask him to drive the divs from their city. In return they offer to help drive Ḥamza's enemy away from Mecca. They do this, then fly off to Mt. Qāf with Ḥamza.

Bozorjmehr writes to ʿOmar telling him that he knows the whole story and that Ḥamza will be away for eighteen years. He tells ʿOmar to take Mehr Negār to Tangiers, so ʿOmar sets out, and the enemy attacks. They are able to reach a city and take shelter there.

Ḥamza reaches Mt. Qāf and enters the Golden City, where he meets Khezr. The divs return from hunting and Ḥamza kills several. He reconquers the city for the paris.

Twenty-second Story. Ḥamza wants to return to his army, so as a reward the paris allow him to choose a hat and a whip which belonged to Solomon. On the way he stops to rest. The divs attack and drive off Ḥamza's escort, then retake the city.

Ḥamza reaches water, builds a boat and sails away. He is cast up on a beach where he sinks into a swamp. There the paris find him and take him back to their city. Ḥamza vanquishes the divs again, and marries a pari named ʿAsmā.

ʿOmar and his force, after three years in that city,

reach Aleppo. They remain there for three years, then set out for the West. They reach another city just ahead of the enemy in pursuit of them.

Twenty-third Story. Ḥamza has a daughter by the pari ʿAsmā. He is lovesick for Mehr Negār, and ʿAsmā is jealous. He sets out alone to return to Mehr Negār, and meets Khezr again. Khezr tells him to seek the divs whenever he sees smoke, a garden or a pool, and gives him a magic rope.

After three years ʿOmar and his band leave the city and reach Shirvan. They remain some years there, then head West again with the enemy in pursuit. They reach Tangiers and there is a letter from Bozorjmehr telling them to wait there until Ḥamza meets them.

Ḥamza is drugged by a div and sewn into a camel skin, but the simorgh rescues him. Ḥamza destroys many divs with the help of his daughter who comes to his aid. A voice says that she will live until Ḥoseyn becomes caliph.

Twenty-fourth Story. A div seizes Ḥamza, takes him high in the air and asks if he prefers to be dropped on the land or the sea. He chooses the sea, but angels bring him safely to land. The same div is found molesting a pari. The div marries the pari and from this union a three-eyed horse is born. Khezr provides horseshoes for it.

Ḥamza rescues three mortals from a castle and they sail off on a ship. The simorgh attacks and Ḥamza kills

it, taking a feather. They land and fight more divs. In a desert they meet Dajjāl, whom they can not kill for it is not yet time. Ḥamza blinds Dajjāl and his donkey in the right eye.

Twenty-fifth Story. Ḥamza proceeds to the Pil gush-ān. They advise him to find a certain old woman who is a friend of Kheẓr's. Ḥamza rides the three-eyed horse to the woman's garden. She tells them to kill Salamander birds (sic) and make fireproof clothing out of their skins. She parts the waters, and as they reach safety she dies.

ʿOmar and his band become very hungry in Tangiers. One of the generals leaves to find food. He finds a city where the homā sits on his shoulder and he is made king. Ḥamza arrives and together they convert the population and move on.

Twenty-sixth Story. They reach Tangiers, eighteen years later to the day. Ḥamza enters the city and is reunited with Mehr Negār.

Twenty-seventh Story. The enemy is still attacking Tangiers. Ḥamza comes out and fights all day. He loses his helmet and suffers a severe wound in the head. His army is defeated and flees to Aleppo (sic). The daughter of Nāṣer of Egypt who cleaned herself with Ḥamza's cloth became pregnant from it and has borne a son whom she names ʿOmar ibn Ḥamza. He goes to the court of Nowshiravān and announces that he will avenge the death of his father (falsely reported). ʿOmar ibn Ḥamza kills several

courtiers. He and Ḥamza meet, and news of the existence of Ḥamza's son reaches Mehr Negār who becomes jealous. Ḥamza loses patience and drives her from the city. The enemy pursue her, and Ḥamza becomes remorseful when all his friends turn against him. Soon Ḥamza and Mehr Negār are reconciled.

Twenty-eighth Story. Ḥamza's men take Zubin's castle in Turkestan by trick. Ḥamza arrives after it has been captured.

Twenty-ninth Story. Ḥamza and Mehr Negār are married. Ḥamza and his son fight and Ḥamza is victorious. Ḥamza has another son by Mehr Negār and names him Qobād.

Thirtieth Story. Zubin, dispossessed of his fortress in Turkestan, tries to incite Nowshiravān against Ḥamza. Ḥamza crowns his son Qobād king to replace Nowshiravān, whom Ḥamza says has turned against him. Ḥamza then sets out for Kuhistan to fight the forces loyal to Nowshiravān. He reaches a mountain fortress and sends a letter to Nowshiravān by the hand of his son 'Omar. War is declared and they fight two days. Landhur's son arrives from India with reinforcements for Ḥamza. They fight for ten days and nights, then Ḥamza shouts and captures the enemy general. Nowshiravān and his courtiers come to Ḥamza and in return for their lives, pretend to convert.

Thirty-first Story. Ḥamza goes to the mountain palace and Nowshiravān returns to Ctesiphon. Ḥamza's father writes from Mecca that enemies including Bakhtak have at-

tacked Mecca. Ḥamza and ʿOmar Omayya reach Mecca and in disguise, join a group of travelling players in the enemy's court. Ḥamza subdues the enemy general, converts him and sends him back to his own country.

Thirty-second Story. The returning general stops off to see Nowshiravān on his way. He is angry at being shamed by Ḥamza and kidnaps Nowshiravān.

Bakhtak writes (falsely) to Zubin and others that Ḥamza is dead. They plan a revolt and an enemy will marry Mehr Negār. They attack Ḥamza's men but the Arabs drive the rebels off.

(End of Volume I)

Samak-e 'Ayyār

The story begins in Aleppo 370,000 years before the birth of the Prophet Moḥammad. The king of Aleppo is Marzbān Shāh and his vizier is Hāmān. Marzbān Shāh has no son and is growing old. The horoscope shows that his son's mother will be from Iraq, where it is known that the king has a beautiful daughter who was once married and has a son, Farrokh Ruz. The arrangements are made and the girl is brought to Aleppo to marry Marzbān Shāh. She gives birth to a son whom they name Khorshid Shāh. Farrokh Ruz is sent to Aleppo and the two boys grow up together.

* * *

Khorshid Shāh likes to hunt, and on one expedition he and his companions remain away a week. One day a strange-looking wild ass runs past. Khorshid Shāh pursues it but it escapes and he is lost. He sees a dreadful desert with a rich tent set up at the edge. He enters and finds a beautiful girl asleep, and when she wakes up he falls in love with her. She gives him a drugged drink, and the next morning his companions find him sleeping on the ground. The tent and the girl are gone and nobody will believe his story until he notices that his ring is gone and has been replaced by one bearing a strange inscription. The horoscope of Khorshid Shāh predicts that he will find the girl, have a prolonged stay abroad, become a king and be successful in his adventures. Months later an old man

reads the inscription which says that the ring belongs to the princess of Chin, Mah Pari. She has a nurse who is an evil sorceress (she was both the wild ass and the old man), who prevents the success of any suitor.

Khorshid Shāh regains his health and sets out with Farrokh Ruz for the kingdom of Chin. The faghfur is the ruler of Chin and his vizier is Mehrān. When a messenger comes from the faghfur to discover the purpose of their visit, Khorshid Shāh says he has come to ask for the girl. He and Farrokh Ruz change places, being identical in appearance. The girl and the nurse arrive and the nurse presents the tests which all the suitors must undergo. In the first test, Farrokh Ruz (as Khorshid Shāh) breaks a wild horse, and in the second he kills a huge black slave with whom he must wrestle. In the third, he refuses to answer a difficult riddle, saying that it is a trick. The nurse magically carries him off and they disappear.

* * *

Khorshid Shāh befriends a bazaar merchant and through him reaches the house of Shogāl-e Pil Zur, the sepahsālār of the city and chief of the ‘ayyārs. Samak-e ‘Ayyār is his lieutenant and the cleverest ‘ayyar of them all. Khorshid Shāh joins them, and they choose Farrokh Ruz as their "patron" because of his javānmardi in sacrificing himself for his younger brother. Khorshid Shāh asks their help in gaining the princess, and they promise him aid.

A servant of the princess Mah Pari is a friend of Samak, and she agrees to help Khorshid Shāh. She outfits him as a singing girl and takes him to sing for Mah Pari. Finding an opportunity, he drugs the evil nurse, and carries her off to the house of the javānmardān. He returns to Mah Pari in his disguise, and Samak and Pil Zur beat the nurse.

Khorshid Shāh drugs Mah Pari and goes in search of Farrokh Ruz. He drugs a guard in the nurse's quarters, descends to a cellar and finds Farrokh Ruz and a group of unsuccessful suitors. He frees Farrokh Ruz and the following day he drugs the princess again, kills the guard and releases the other prisoners. They all go to the house of the javānmardān. The next day the palace is in an uproar and the king questions the ṣayyārs. They take the prisoners and the nurse to the king. Samak kills the nurse.

Mah Pari has fallen in love with Khorshid Shāh, but the son of the vizier Mehrān also wants her. The vizier proposes a tournament. Khorshid Shāh accepts and kills fifty challengers before killing the vizier's son. Samak shames the vizier who begins to plot against Samak. Shoghāl bargains with the king on behalf of Khorshid Shāh and they agree to have the ṣagd in ten days.

Samak plots to carry off Mah Pari to protect her, but Mehrān also plots the same thing. As Samak is lowering her down from the roof at night, the vizier's slave cuts

her off Samak's rope and makes off with her. Meanwhile the vizier and a hero find Mah Pari, whom they take to Mehrān's house. The king learns of this and confronts the vizier, who lies to him. He suggests that the king has allowed the javānmardān to gain too much power in the city, and that he should do away with them by ambushing them in the court on Mah Pari's wedding day.

* * *

The ambush succeeds. Many ḥayyārs are killed and Khorshid Shāh, Farrokh Ruz and Shoghāl are captured. Samak feigns death and escapes. The vizier orders that the house of the javānmardān be destroyed. A gravedigger finds Samak and takes him home to recover. Later, Samak robs a rich jeweller and pays his debt to the gravedigger and the doctor who treated him. The doctor is caught with the gold and is jailed with Shoghāl and the others.

Samak rescues the prisoners and takes them to hide in a friend's house.

* * *

Mehrān the vizier plots to have Arman Shāh, the king of Māchin, attack the faghfur, and as an inducement offers Mah Pari to Arman Shāh's son Qizil Malek. Arman Shāh sets out with an army and writes to the faghfur to send him Mah Pari and ten years' tribute or face war.

Samak frees Khorshid Shāh and Farrokh Ruz from their prison but they are seen by the vizier's slave. The king grows concerned and sends a force to capture them. Samak

and the others take refuge in a narrow cul-de-sac. The city people help them. The vizier arrives and tries to drive them out with fire. Samak rushes out alone and kills the leader of the king's forces. They capture him.

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Samak is taken before the faghfur and beaten. The others dig themselves out of the end of the street, where they find an underground room and pool. A water channel leads to Mah Pari's garden. She has Samak brought in as the other escapees arrive and hide in her quarters.

Mehrān advises the faghfur to fight Qizil Malek. Shoghāl, Khorshid Shāh and Farrokh Ruz slip out to the house of a friend. A relation of Khorshid Shāh's arrives seeking news of him. Khorshid Shāh sends him back to Marzbān Shāh, asking him to send an army.

The vizier now encourages the faghfur to give Mah Pari to Qizil Malek, but she refuses. The faghfur ties her up and will send her to Qizil Malek.

* * *

Mah Pari is put into a trunk and carried to Qizil Malek. Samak and his men rescue her en route, and they go to a valley where Samak has an ʿayyār friend. The friend refuses to surrender them to the faghfur. For safekeeping they lodge Mah Pari in a nearby castle until the enemy is defeated.

* * *

The keeper of the castle is the evil nurse's son,

and Mah Pari must be rescued from him. The battle with Qizil Malek begins; Khorshid Shāh and the army fight during the day and Samak prowls about at night. One night when Samak is bound for the enemy camp to kidnap their general, he meets an enemy ‘ayyār, Āteshak, who had come to try to capture him. Samak persuades him to defect with the promise that he will help him gain the princess of Māchin, whom he loves. Together they capture the enemy general and bring him to Khorshid Shāh. Qizil Malek will not fight without his general, and stalls for time while he sends for reinforcements.

* * *

Shoghāl-e Pil Zur, the sepahsālār of Chin and chief of the javānmardān, has a counterpart in Māchin named Kānun. He and his assistant Kāfur set out to capture Samak and Shoghāl.

* * *

Samak and Āteshak reach the castle where they will try to rescue Mah Pari. The castle keeper also loves Mah Pari, and plots to have her. Samak gains entry under a pretext and sees Mah Pari. He drugs the castle keeper at a feast and kills all the guards after getting them drunk. Samak turns the castle over to Khorshid Shāh.

Reinforcements have arrived for Qizil Malek, along with the two ‘ayyārs, Kānun and Kāfur. Samak will now go to Māchin to fetch the princess he promised to Āteshak.

* * *

Mehrān, vizier of the faghfur, fearing that his plotting will be discovered and result in his death, decides to flee to the enemy. He writes to Qizil Malek to capture him in a certain place. The message is intercepted and Mehrān is captured by the forces of Khorshid Shāh. Qizil Malek's spies will try to rescue Mehrān.

Samak and his ally Āteshak reach the city of Māchin, disguise themselves and seek employment at Kānun's house. Kānun's two sons trail Samak and Āteshak when they go out at night, and learn their identity. Samak kidnaps the princess and they take her to a wine seller's house. Kānun's sons are ordered the next day to find out what happened to the princess. Samak dresses as a woman and lures one brother into a trap in broad daylight. He later captures the other brother and takes them both to the wine seller's house.

Kānun and Kāfur, disguised as donkey drivers, reach the valley where the army of Chin is camped, and rescue Mehrān and the general. Qizil Malek sends Mehrān and some prisoners from Khorshid Shāh's army to his father in Māchin. The battle resumes the next day.

In Māchin, Samak observes the prisoners being brought in. Mehrān warns the king to beware of Samak, for he thinks he is in the city. Samak rescues the prisoners and they go to the house of a friend. The friend's son Sorkh Vard arrives and joins Samak as an ‘ayyār.

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The next day Samak enters the court in disguise as they are beating the jailor for allowing the prisoners to be rescued. Samak beats him until he confesses. Samak plans to kidnap Mehrān that night but is prevented by an acute attack of stomach trouble.

* * *

The battle continues and the faghfur sends to the provinces for more troops. A large army appears in a cloud of dust and neither side knows who it is. It is Hāmān, the vizier of Marzbān Shāh, Khorshid Shāh's father in Aleppo.

* * *

Kānun plans to kidnap Mah Pari from the castle and give her to Qizil Malek. He enters the castle and persuades her that he is a messenger from her father. He hurries her off to the enemy camp, and they decide to put her in another castle, even more remote than the last.

Hāmān reports that Khorshid Shāh's father is on the way to join them. Khorshid Shāh's army routs the enemy, but when he learns of the kidnapping of Mah Pari, he advances on Māchin.

* * *

Kānun delivers Mah Pari to the castle and returns to Māchin. Qizil Malek and his army arrive in flight. Khorshid Shāh reaches the gates of Māchin, and Qizil Malek sends to the provinces for aid. Samak's stomach recovers and he disguises himself as an officer to escort a messen-

ger from Hāmān to the king of Māchin. Hāmān proposes peace and the return of Mah Pari. The king favors this but Qizil Malek refuses.

Samak and Sorkh Vard reach the castle where Mah Pari is kept, and enter disguised as a woodcutter's assistants. While changing clothes in the castle, Samak learns that Sorkh Vard is a girl. Samak marries her, then smuggles Mah Pari out of the castle with the woodcutters. They hide Mah Pari in a cave.

(End of Volume I)

Volume II

A messenger from Arman Shāh finds the castle in an uproar. Samak sends Āteshak back to get help from Khorshid Shāh, after which Āteshak sets off for Māchin to see how his girl is. The women are found in the cave by an enemy general and are returned to the castle. Khorshid Shāh's troops sent to help Samak are all killed when the enemy drops rocks and fire on them.

A youth in the castle, Niāl, joins Samak and will help him rescue Mah Pari again. They kill the palace guard and Nial reports to Khorshid Shāh that Samak now holds the castle. Samak gives Mah Pari over to Khorshid Shāh and sets off for Māchin to kidnap Mehrān.

* * *

Hāmān writes to Arman Shāh again suggesting peace,

but Qizil Malek refuses, since he still wants Mah Pari. Kānun the ‘Ayyār leaves, promising to bring back both Khorshid Shāh and Mah Pari. He reaches the camp and begins to dig a tunnel into Khorshid Shāh's tent. The wedding of Khorshid Shāh and Mah Pari can not be held because Mah Pari is menstruating. The wedding is put off a week. The battle begins again the next day.

In Māchin, three of Samak's assistants go out to seek Mehrān and none returns. Samak himself goes to the palace and captures Mehrān's servant and learns the news. With the servant's help Samak makes off with Mehrān that night.

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Kānun's tunnel reaches Khorshid Shāh's throne. The wedding is held but before consumation they all get drunk and fall asleep. Kānun kidnaps the newlyweds and takes them to Arman Shāh in Māchin. They are sent to a castle.

Samak enters the palace in Māchin disguised as a woman, and ties up the queen and her daughter. He finds Khorshid Shāh and Mah Pari and insists that they consumate the marriage, which they do. That night Samak takes them back to their camp, bringing the queen and daughter too.

The next day before battle prisoners are exchanged, and Samak returns to Māchin to find the other ‘ayyārs. Qizil Malek is advised by his vizier to stop seeking Mah Pari since she is no longer a maiden. Khorshid Shāh refuses to return the queen for a ransom. During the battle

which follows, Mah Pari disguises herself as a man and goes out to watch. While she is out, the queen of Māchin and her daughter escape from Mah Pari's tent.

* * *

Samak sets out in Māchin alone. He learns from a friend that there is a dangerous ᶑayyār, Sorkh Kāfur, out to kill him. Samak overwhelms him in the bazaar and leaves him with the friend. Samak then mutilates Mehrān, and throws him out into the street, and returns to Khorshid Shāh. Later he returns to the city to rescue the remaining prisoners. He learns that the prisoners are kept in a certain castle, and on the way there he meets Kānun in the bazaar. He kills one of the ᶑayyārs and captures the rest, except for Kānun.

With a new recruit, Yārakh, Samak enters Kānun's house unrecognized. He is betrayed however, and tied up. Kānun's daughter Ruz Afzun is an ᶑayyār too, and pitying Samak, she sets him free. Samak and Yārakh go to the palace to find his beloved, a lady-in-waiting of the queen. Samak ties up the queen and her daughter again, and Ruz Afzun carries them off to a friend's house. Samak is unsuccessful, and after several days and nights of intense ᶑayyār activity, he returns to Khorshid Shāh.

The faghfur arrives with his army, and Samak goes to the city to find Mah Pari. A ten-day truce is declared, during which time Samak captures Kānun and Kāfur. They are brought to the court and killed at once, because they

had captured Khorshid Shāh. A letter from Mah Pari arrives and Samak traces it and learns that she is a prisoner in the governor's house. He prepares to rescue her, but Khorshid Shāh himself comes to do the same thing. Samak kills the governor and rescues Mah Pari. They all return safely to camp.

Samak captures an enemy ‘ayyār, swears him in, and they discover an ally named Ghur in a nearby valley. Ghur answers a letter from Arman Shāh by saying that he will never give up Samak from his protection. They attack Ghur but Samak and the ‘ayyārs do their night work and frustrate the enemy.

Samak and Ruz Afzun inspect the valley and find a treasure and a prisoner crying behind a locked door. Reinforcements come for the enemy. In a battle Ruz Afzun is captured but later Samak rescues her and kills an enemy general at night. Then Sorkh Vard is captured. Samak rescues her too and kills several more enemy general.

Behind the locked door in the valley is a black slave of Ghur's who has captured Ruz Afzun and plans to eat her. Samak tricks the black into freeing her. Farrokh Ruz wants to challenge the enemy in single combat, but Khorshid Shāh is worried because of a prophetic dream which predicted separation from him. Farrokh Ruz is captured and the prophecy comes true. Qizil Malek kills him.

Khorshid Shāh executes an enemy general, and in retaliation Arman Shāh beheads an ‘ayyār of Samak's. The

general's brother seeks revenge on Khorshid Shāh.

(End of Volume II)

Glossary

The definitions given in this glossary are meant for guidance only. They are not meant to be comprehensive, and by and large they suggest only the meaning of the word in its context in this study.

adab literature. Polite or sophisticated Islamic literature of the pre-modern period.

aḥdāṣ. See ʿayyār and javānmard. This term was prevalent in Syria and Upper Mesopotamia.

akhi. See ʿayyār and javānmard. This term was prevalent in Anatolia.

andarun. The women's quarters of a dwelling place. See also ḥaram.

andarz literature. Didactic or wisdom literature in Persia.

ʿaṣabiyya. Group feeling or solidarity.

ʿayyār. A member of an organized group from the lower strata of medieval Islamic society adhering to a special code of personal conduct and honor. The precise definition of ʿayyār varies with the era, the location and the point of view of the user. See also javānmard.

ʿayyāri. The practice of an ʿayyār. See also javānmardi.

bahr-e ṭavīl. A form of rhythmic prose employed in oral narrations for dramatic or other special effects.

chādor. A garment worn by a woman which veils her from head to toe.

dehqān. A member of the Persian minor landed nobility or gentry.

div. A demon.

divān. A register. The collected writings of an individual.

ʿefrit. An imaginary, malevolent being.

esnād. The succession of chiefs of an order leading back to its founder. The chain of transmitters of a Tradition or an anecdote.

farr. In Iranian religious and epic literature, a divine legitimizing force which attaches itself, sometimes in physical form, to a ruler. cf. fortuna.

fetyān. Arabic equivalent of the Persian javānmardān.

fotovvat. Arabic equivalent of the Persian javānmardi.

ghāzi. In Islam, a warrior for the faith.

ghul. An imaginary, malevolent being.

haram. The women's quarters of a dwelling place. See also andarun.

herbed. In Zoroastrianism, a lower priestly rank.

javānmard. An adherent to a special code of personal conduct. Some of the javānmardān (pl.) were 'ayyārs.

javānmardi. The personal qualities or practice of a javānmard.

jehād. In Islam, holy war.

man. A weight equivalent to approximately 4.8 lb.

maṣnavi. A verse form in which the half-lines of each verse rhyme, but the verses do not rhyme with each other.

mobed. In Zoroastrianism, the highest priestly rank.

morā'āt al-naẓir. Congruity of terms in poetry.

naqqāl. A professional narrator in present day Iran.

naqqāli. Narration of heroic tales in public. The art of the naqqāl.

pahlavān. A hero, or champion.

pari. An imaginary female being, generally of a benevolent nature.

Pil-gushān. A mythical people with elephant's ears.

qāzi. A judge in an Islamic court of law.

selsela. A Sufi or other order founded by a respected religious man and led by his successors.

sepahsālār. The military chief of a city.

shāṭer. A member of the retinue of a prince or powerful individual, who performed the functions of runner, messenger, body-guard and symbol of affluence.

shortā. The police force or constabulary.

simorgh. A mythical bird.

zangi. A black or negro.

zur-khāna. Special building for the performance of traditional physical exercises in Persia.

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